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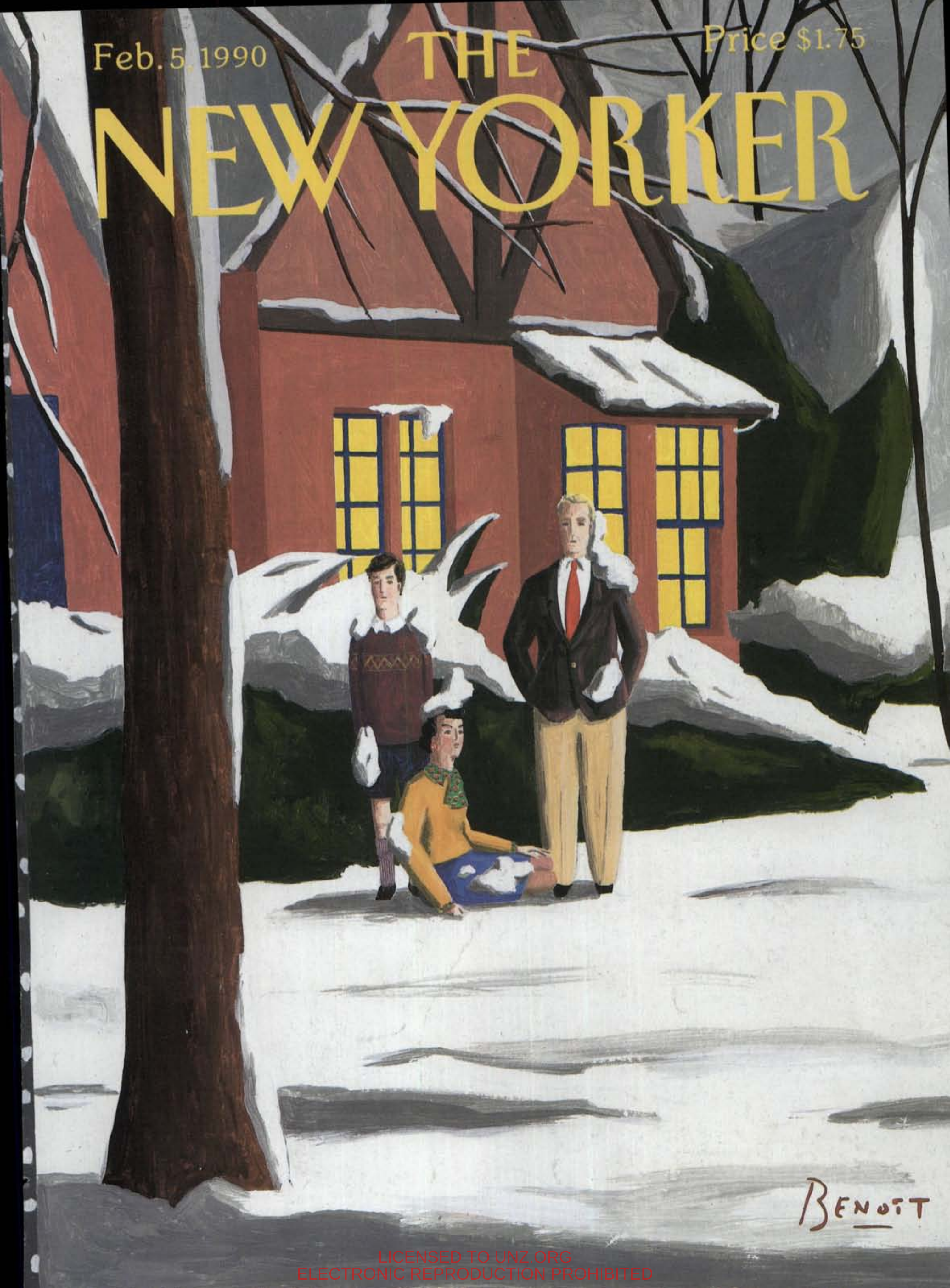

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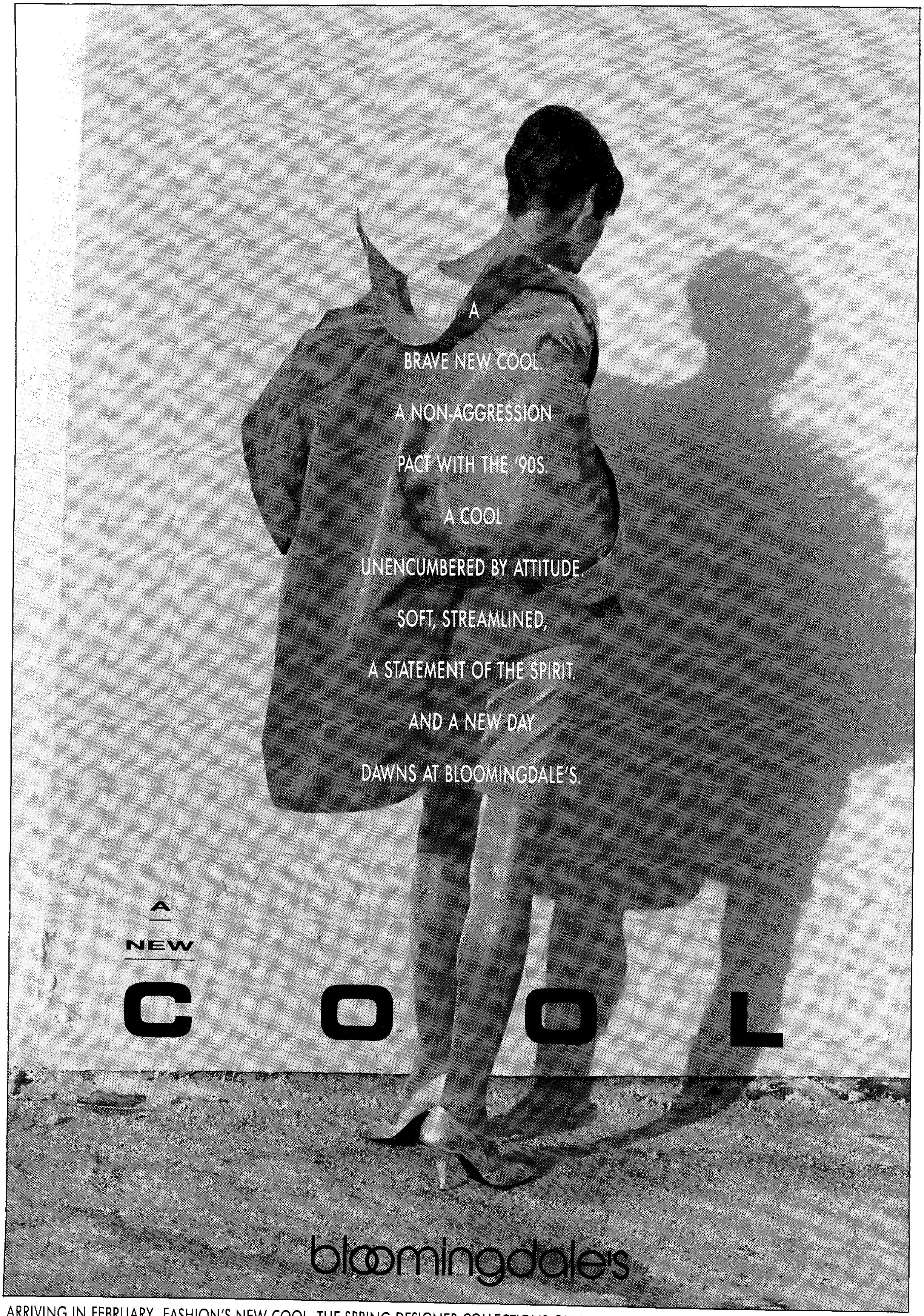
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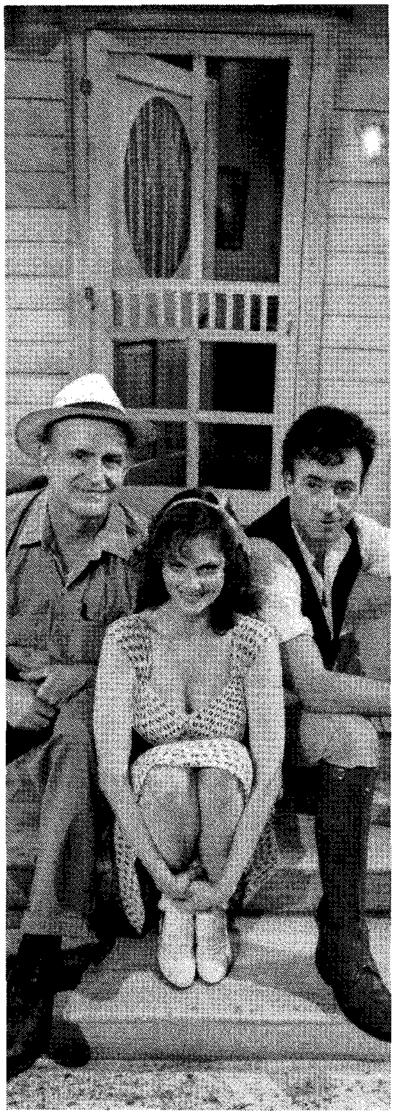

Body heat, blackmail and a baby doll

form a
fiery triangle in
Tennessee Williams'
classic tale
of power and
fragility.

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Lesley Ann Warren as Flora,
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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

THE latest edition of Gerard Alessandrini's long-running spoof on New York theatre, "Forbidden Broadway," includes sendups of "Meet Me in St. Louis," "Grand Hotel," "City of Angels," "The Circle," Dustin Hoffman ("The Merchant of Venice"), Vanessa Redgrave ("Orpheus Descending"), and Sting ("3 Penny Opera"), as well as of the current revivals of "Gypsy" and "Sweeney Todd." Suffice it to say that anyone who has either enjoyed or suffered through any one of these productions probably owes himself a trip to Theatre East, where "Forbidden Broadway 1990" opened on January 23.

Director Jerry Zaks

The point about Alessandrini's satire—and it is satire, not mere parody—is that you don't necessarily have to have disliked a play or musical or revival in order to experience catharsis at the roasting it gets; in some cases, you don't even need to have seen the production. Take the middle-aged physician who came with us to "Forbidden Broadway." He's seen "Les Misérables" three times. Spring comes and he feels a call and takes himself off to see the show again. Yet during the burlesque of "Les Mis" we thought he'd burst a blood vessel laughing. (His wife, who hadn't seen Mandy Patinkin's concert-show "Dress Casual," leaned over during its sendup and whispered, "You know, you only need to have been alive somewhere on the planet when one of these things was produced in order to find it funny.")

This is partly because so much of what Alessandrini is responding to is the hype that surrounds Broadway theatre. He goes straight for whatever aspect of a production has been billed or praised as being remarkable and turns that on its head, showing you what was ridiculous about the idea. Admittedly, Alessandrini doesn't always have to do much; but most of the time he outdoes himself. We wouldn't have thought it possible to create anything funnier than, say, his parodies of "Les Mis" or "M. Butterfly" from the last edition. But the sendup of "3 Penny Opera" is at once so hip and so sophisticated that we honestly don't know whether it will be more appreciated by people who know their Sting or people who know their Weill, Brecht, and Lenya.

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	29	30	31	1	2	3
4	5	6	7			

OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Circle Repertory Company—The third play of the season is **imagining brad,** a comedy by Peter Hedges. With Sharon Ernster and Erin Cressida Wilson. Previews through Feb. 4. Opens Feb. 6 at 8. (Players, 115 Macdougal St. 254-5076.)

A Forest in Arden—Christopher Grabowski's adaptation of "As You Like It," presented by the New York Theatre Workshop. Previews through Feb. 6. Opens Feb. 7 at 8, and runs through Feb. 24. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200.)

Manhattan Punch Line—Presenting a festival of new one-act comedies. Program A: "Philip Glass Buys a Loaf of Bread," by David Ives; "Portfolio," by Tom Donaghy; "The Show Must Go On," by Laurence Klavan; and "How Are Things in Costa del Fuego?," by Rick Louis. Previews Jan. 29-30. Opens Jan. 31 at 6:45. . . . ¶ Program B: "The Fertilization Opera," by Peter Tolan; "Grunions," by Barbara Lindsay; "Brunch at Trudy and Paul's," by Michael Aschner; "Fellow Travellers," by Jeffrey Hatcher; and "Artistic Direction," by Roger Hedden. Previews Feb. 1-2. Opens Feb. 3 at 6:45. (Judith Anderson, 422 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

One of the Guys—A comedy by Marilyn Suzanne Miller about a Central Park baseball team. With Stephen Collins and Bruce MacVittie, among others. In previews. (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

Sex, Drugs, Rock & Roll—Eric Bogosian's new one-man show. Directed by Jo Bonney. In previews. (Orpheum, 126 Second Ave., at 8th St. 477-2477.)

Some Americans Abroad—A comedy by Richard Nelson, imported from London. The cast includes Bob Balaban, Kate Burton, Henderson Forsythe, and Elizabeth Shue. In previews. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.)

Square One—Richard Thomas and Dianne Wiest in a two-character play by Steve Tesich, which Jerry Zaks directed. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

When She Danced—A play about Isadora Duncan by Martin Sherman. With Elizabeth Ashley, Jacqueline Bertrand, and Robert Dorfman. In previews. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Zora Neale Hurston—A play by Laurence Holder, with Elizabeth Van Dyke as the author of "Their Eyes Were Watching God." Directed by Wynn Handman. Previews through Feb. 3. Opens Feb. 4 at 3, and runs through Feb. 25. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

NEW THIS SEASON

The Art of Success—Tim Curry portrays William Hogarth in the American première of a 1986 comedy by Nick Dear. Suzanne Bertish is also in the cast. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes Feb. 11.)

Away Alone—Recent illegal Irish immigrants are the subject of a play by Janet Noble. With Bronagh Murphy and Michael Healy. (Irish Arts Center, 553 W. 51st St. 757-3318.)

The Circle—Rex Harrison, Glynis Johns, Stewart Granger, and an able supporting company have raised Somerset Maugham to the heights of Sheridan and Congreve. The play is about an elderly couple who pay a visit to the wife's middle-aged son, whom she deserted thirty years before. Brian Murray directed the fine production. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/4/89.) (Ambassador, 215 W. 49th St. 239-6200.)

City of Angels—Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; James Naughton and Gregg Edelman, leading men; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in absolutely top form in the sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. The plot concerns the making of a private-eye movie (and the unmaking of its author). The spectacular settings and costumes were designed by Robin Wagner and Florence Klotz and lighted by Paul Gallo. (12/25/89) (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Closer than Ever—This charmer amounts to an anthology of songs and sketches by Richard Maltby, Jr. (words), and David Shire (music), as sung and performed by Brent Barrett, Sally Mayers, Richard Muenz, and Lynne Wintersteller. They are a gifted quartet, and lucky to have such attractive, humorous, and tender songs to sing and words to speak. The fact that there is no amplification is an extra boon. (11/13/89) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde—Another example of the current literary and dramatic vogue for recasting the strange case, this time by Georg Osterman. The production has the Ridiculous Theatrical Company's usual vices (excessive length, scattershot antics) and virtues (clever sets, animated performances by, among others, Everett Quinton and Eureka). (Charles Ludlam Theatre, One Sheridan Square. 691-2271.)

The Doctor's Dilemma—Charles Keating stars in a revival of Shaw's comedy. Directed by Larry Carpenter. (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

A Few Good Men—"Mister Roberts" meets "The Mary Tyler Moore Show." Aaron Sorkin's military-courtroom drama treats issues such as justice, honor, loyalty, and morality with the slick, facile smugness of a half-hour comedy series, but the performances, by an ace cast under Don Scardino's direction, are wonderful. (11/27/89) (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Grand Hotel—The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (11/27/89) (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.)

Gypsy—This revival of the great Sondheim-Styne-Laurents-Robbins musical (directed by Arthur Laurents himself) is so delightful—and the cast (led by Tyne Daly, Crista Moore, and Jonathan Hadary) so engaging—that we think anyone would be happier for having seen it. One suggestion: don't applaud when Mama Rose comes down the aisle (you'll drown out the first number). Trust Broadway; you'll have ample time to welcome Miss Daly when she mounts the steps and delivers her first onstage line. (12/4/89) (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

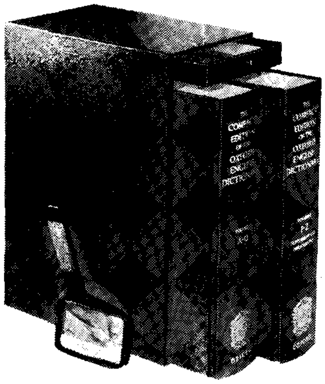
Juan Darién—A revival of a 1988 Music-Theatre Group production, performed by a company of actors, dancers, musicians, and puppeteers. Conceived by Julie Taymor and Elliot Goldenthal (who also wrote the music), and based on a short story by Horacio Quiroga. Directed by Ms. Taymor. (St. Clement's, 423 W. 46th St. 279-4200.)

Junon and Avos—A rock musical, presented by Moscow's Lenin Komsomol Theatre. In Russian, with English narration. (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907. Closes Feb. 4.)

Lear—In this Mabou Mines adaptation of Shakespeare's "King Lear," the title character is a nineteen-fifties Southern woman (played by Ruth Maleczech) with three sons. (Triplex, 199 Chambers St. 618-1980.)

Macbeth—Except for Raul Julia's strong, eloquent presence, there's little to praise in this

PERMANENT PLEASURES



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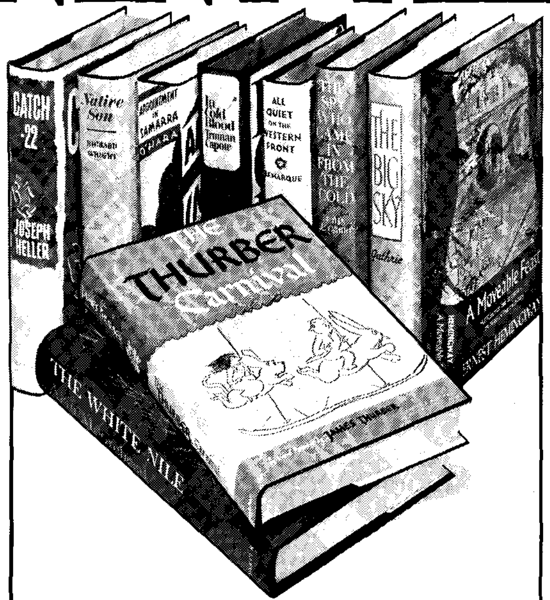

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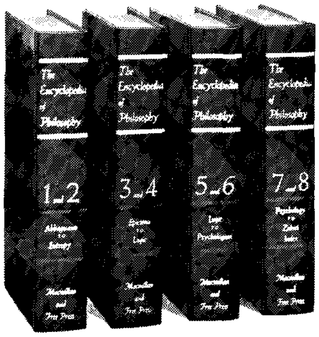

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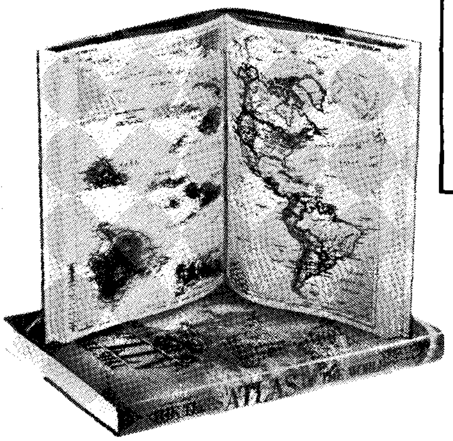

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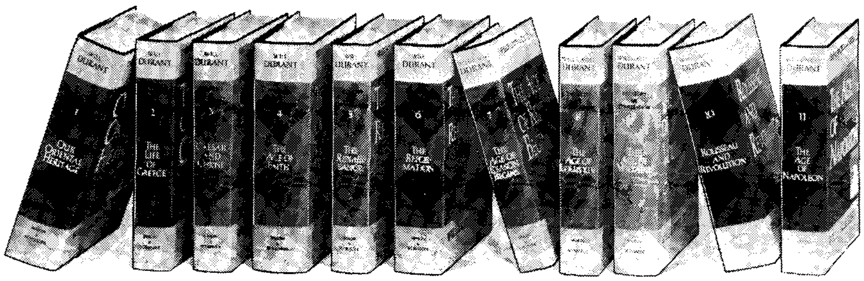

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most recent production in the Shakespeare cycle. (1/29/90) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150. Closes Feb. 4.)

Medea—Joanne Camp stars in the Pearl Theatre Company's production of Euripides' drama. Also in the cast are Sylvia Davis, Michael John McGuinness, and Frank Geraci. (Pearl Theatre, 125 W. 22nd St. 645-7708. Closes Feb. 17.)

Meet Me in St. Louis—If you like the old M-G-M musical, you probably won't like this stage version, which combines the earnest, wholesome values of the movie with an aesthetic of surpassing vulgarity. In any case, why see the show when you can rent the movie? (11/20/89) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.)

The Merchant of Venice—This production, directed by Peter Hall, tries a little too hard to avoid anti-Semitism (by making Christians look awful) and seems more interested in the quality of male bonding than that of mercy. As Shylock, Dustin Hoffman is dignified but ultimately ineffective. Fortunately, the production is about great ensemble Shakespeare rather than about Hoffman's Shylock, and would be worth seeing if only for Michael Siberry (Gratiano) and Geraldine James (Portia). (1/1/90) (46th Street Theatre, 226 W. 46th St. 246-0102.)

Moving Targets—The umbrella title for several one-acters by Joe Pintauro. With Anita Gillette. (Vineyard Theatre, 309 E. 26th St. 353-3874.)

Negro Ensemble Company—Charles Fuller's **JONQUIL** is the third in his proposed cycle of plays about newly freed slaves during, and immediately after, the Civil War. Set in South Carolina, it deals with, among other things, the efforts of the ex-slaves to obtain the vote and the brutal tactics of the Ku Klux Klan to stop them. While interesting throughout and well acted, the play is not as dynamic as its two predecessors. With Cynthia Bond, Samuel Jackson, Charles Weldon, and Graham Brown, among other N.E.C. stalwarts. Douglas Turner Ward directed. (1/29/90) (Theatre Four, 424 W. 55th St. 246-8545. Closes Feb. 4.)

Othello—Michael Rogers has the title role in this production by Theatre for a New Audience. Directed by William Gaskill. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 279-4200. Closes Feb. 17.)

Sweeney Todd—Bob Gunton and Beth Fowler in the York Theatre Company's production of the Sondheim musical. Susan H. Schulman was the director. (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

Tru—Robert Morse gives a deeply thought-out, accomplished performance as Truman Capote—by turns funny, bitchy, ironic, and rueful—at the end of his life and his tether. The play was written by Jay Presson Allen. (1/1/90) (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

LONG RUNS

BLACK AND BLUE: An evening of classic blues and jazz, conceived, designed, and directed by Claudio Segovia and Héctor Orezzoli, who created "Tango Argentino" in a similarly commemorative but far less visually opulent style. Musicians of renown have been assembled, and while Ruth Brown, Linda Hopkins, and Carrie Smith sing, Bunny Briggs, Jimmy Slyde, and a troupe of hoofers young and old give the tap-dance subculture a workout. (Minskoff, 45th St. west of Broadway. 246-0102.) . . . **CATS:** Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **A CHORUS LINE:** A group of young dancers audition for a handful of chorus jobs in a show not yet in rehearsal, and by the time the evening is over we know everything about all of them. (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **DRIVING MISS DAISY:** Frances Sternhagen and Arthur French star in Alfred Uhry's play, which tells of the growing attachment of a cranky old woman in Atlanta to her black chauffeur. Directed by Ron Lagomarsino. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty this year. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1990:** A source of continual merriment, this recently updated revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **THE HEIDI CHRONICLES:** Wendy Wasserstein's play looks at first glance like standard baby-boom playwriting fare, but some alchemical combination of graceful-mindedness and good writing enables her to capture, lampoon, and transcend her generation all at the same time. With Brooke Adams. (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **JEROME ROBBINS' BROADWAY:** A collection of high spots from "On the Town," "Billion Dollar Baby," "High Button Shoes," "The King and I," "Peter Pan," "West Side Story," "Gypsy," "A Funny Thing Happened on the Way to the Forum," and "Fiddler on the Roof," all of which were choreographed or directed, or both, by Jerome Robbins. Whether Robbins' era—the fifties—was your generation or your parents', this is the show for you. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **THE KATHY AND MO SHOW: PARALLEL LIVES:** Comedy skits and vignettes about gender and its role in society, written and performed by Kathy Najimy and Mo Gaffney. (Westside Arts, 407 W. 43rd St. 541-8394.) . . . **LEND ME A TENOR:** The setting of this farce by Ken Ludwig is a hotel suite in Cleveland in 1934, where a famous tenor who is booked to sing "Otello" takes an overdose of barbiturates. A substitute must be found. Under Jerry Zaks' direction, all the surprises up the dramatist's sleeve are brought to comic life. (Royale, 242 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York stockbroker's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. With John Polito, Priscilla Lopez, Arch Johnson, and Scotty Bloch. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** The much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **RUMORS:** This farce about a party to celebrate a couple's tenth anniversary (the host and hostess are mysteriously absent) may well be the funniest play that Neil Simon has written. Directed by Gene Saks. (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.) . . . **STEEL MAGNOLIAS:** This first play by Robert Harling takes place in a beauty shop in a small town in Louisiana and consists mainly of the often amusing, wisecracking chatter of the proprietress, her assistant, and four steady customers. With Suzy Hunt, Dorrie Joiner, Anna Minot, Jennifer Parsons, Rita Gardner, and Rica Martens. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 246-0102.)

DANCE

IN two years, Nijinsky's Faune is going to turn eighty—a hard-edged, ham-handed, lubricious eighty in the case of most productions of "L'Après-midi d'un Faune," according to Ann Hutchinson Guest. Mrs. Guest, a founder of the Dance Notation Bureau, was in town a little while ago to work with students at the Juilliard dance department who were preparing a new version of the Nijinsky-Debussy-Bakst masterwork. Unlike most stagings of "Faune," which are based on choreography that one generation of dancers has passed down to another through memory, this version—devised by Mrs. Guest and the dance historian Claudia Jeschke—purports to cut back to the source. In 1915, three years after the première of "Faune" with Diaghilev's Ballets Russes, Nijinsky notated the movement in his own system. For some time, Mrs. Guest and Miss Jeschke have labored to decipher Nijinsky's personal notation language; a couple of years ago they cracked the code, which permitted them to convert the instructions into the more widely known Labanotation, and then to realize their findings through the bodies of living dancers.

From what Mrs. Guest told us, and from what the Juilliard dancers presented, we concluded that Nijinsky's ballet was more subtle and more rhythmically intricate and exact than, say, the Joffrey version. This works especially to the advantage of the Nymphs, who, at Juilliard, had a playful relationship to the music and enjoyed more individuation than in other stagings. "The memory-based versions [of "Faune"] make the Nymphs much more angular and harsh," Mrs. Guest said. "We looked at the 1912 de Meyer photos: those Nymphs are women. They're feminine. The score calls for them to arrive on one beat. Why can't they, and still be feminine?" The subdued look worked against the dancer playing the Faune, though. Because he has less business to perform, what he does do must take on monumental significance as gesture. The message about the Faune's part seemed to be that you have to move mountains without moving a muscle. According to legend, this is what Nijinsky did. In the lavish new Vendome Press volume "Afternoon of a Faun: Mallarmé, Debussy, Nijinsky," you can see, again, the de Meyer photographs, with the Faune and his Nymphs, eternally young, moving perpetually in their stillness.

New York City Ballet—Jan. 30 at 8: "Coppélia." . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 8: "Square Dance," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Brahms/Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 8: "Square Dance," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Brahms/Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 8: "Donizetti Variations," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 2: "La Source," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," and "Firebird." . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 8: "Coppélia." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 1: "La Source," "Opus 19/The Dreamer," and "Brahms/Schoenberg Quartet." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 7: "Coppélia." . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 8: "Donizetti

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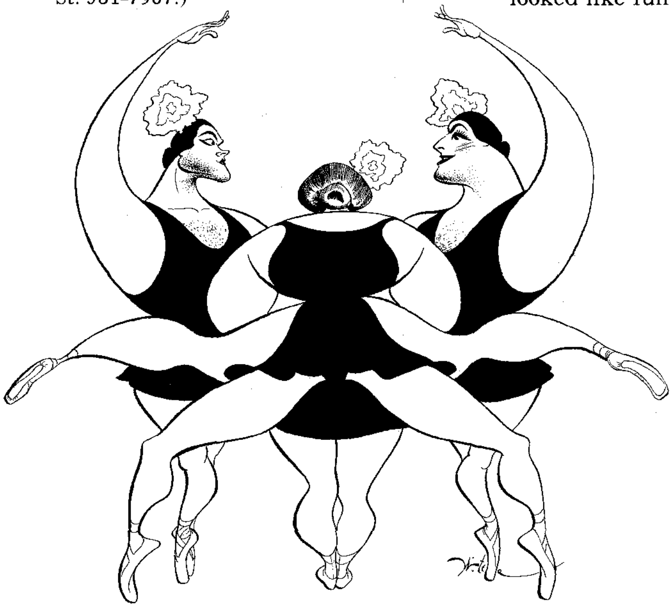
Variations," "Monumentum pro Gesualdo/Movements for Piano and Orchestra," "Beethoven Romance," *and* "Fanfare." . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "The Four Temperaments," "Songs of the Auvergne," and "Symphony in C." (New York State Theatre. 870-5570. The season continues through Feb. 25.)

Don Cossacks—Final performances by this company of eighty singers, dancers, and musicians from the Soviet Union. (Neil Simon Theatre, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102. Jan. 30-Feb. 2 at 8, Feb. 3 at 2 and 8, and Feb. 4 at 3 and 7:30.)

José Greco—With his company of Spanish dancers, singers, and musicians. (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800. Jan. 30 at 7:30; Jan. 31-Feb. 2 at 8; Feb. 3 at 2 and 8; Feb. 4 at 2 and 7:30; and Feb. 6-7 at 8. Through Feb. 18.)

Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that runs through Feb. 18. Feb. 6 at 7:30: Act II of "Swan Lake," "Isadora Deconstructed," "Don Quixote Pas de Deux," "Go for Barocco," and "Gambol." . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 8: "In Kazmidity," "Anarchic Heart," "Black Swan Pas de Deux," and "École de Ballet." (City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)



Les Ballets Trockadero de Monte Carlo

NIGHT LIFE

Marshall Crenshaw is coming out of semi-retirement. Although Warner Brothers released his fifth record, "Good Evening," last June, Mr. Crenshaw, who will be appearing at the Bottom Line February 2-3, hasn't been onstage for two years. "When we were out on tour last time, we were out for most of a year, and it was pretty gruelling," he told us recently. "So I've been lying low since then." In addition, Mr. Crenshaw left Warner Brothers shortly after "Good Evening" came out, and the breakup—he had been with Warners for most of his career—seems to have left him with a sense of dislocation.

Mr. Crenshaw is an anomaly in the pop world. Since he first appeared on the New York club scene, in the late seventies, the singer-guitarist, who grew up in suburban Detroit, has seemed oblivious of trends and concerned mainly with one thing: the perfection of the three-minute pop song. His turf is American roots music—blues, rock, rockabilly, country—and records like "Field Day" and "Downtown" are non-stop displays of songwriting craft. "Good Evening" relies more on outside material than previous albums do. "I had a hard time," he told us. "It seems like every time I tried to write, I had this face in my mind of an A. & R. person scowling at me." Even so, the compositions he put together show no lack of his usual workmanship, and the record is bolstered by well-chosen cover songs and guest guitar work; even the artist himself said that, in the end, he was "really happy with it."

Mr. Crenshaw said his plans now are to concentrate on producing, session work, and "stockpiling a lot of new songs." And, of course, getting ready for his local dates, which are part of a mini-tour of the Eastern Seaboard. "This really came from going to shows and thinking, God, I remember when I used to do that. It looked like fun."

(*A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town.* . . . ¶ Musicians and nightclub proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—The Oak Room, which recently underwent a face-lift and now boasts a higher, acoustically superior ceiling and a better quality of oak panelling, is currently home to **DAUGHERTY & FIELD,** a music-and-comedy team that has been known to sing "Blue Moon" and "Blue Room" at the same time. At nine-fifteen, the frisky duo—Daugherty favors one-liners; Field, the pianist, tends to rely on old-fashioned mugging—present a new revue entitled "Two Guys and a Piano." At eleven-fifteen, they reach back into their repertory with "From Bach to Rock." Until Feb. 3, Daugherty & Field will perform Tuesdays through Saturdays. Dining.

Astro's Turf, Second Ave. at 94th St. (289-0415)—A goofy, futuristic theme bar apparently designed by George Jetson. On the ceiling and floor one finds astronaut dolls playing golf on amoeba-shaped greens; over the bar, a giant green octopus (a sextopus, actually, but who's counting?); and, on Thursdays night's menu, a drink called the Woo Woo Wedge. On a recent night, while a Blues Brothers-ish band held sway onstage, patrons were trying to figure out what the hell NASA had to do with golf, when someone informed them that the longest golf drive ever made was on that distant, grassless country club known as the moon. The informant didn't know if the astronaut in question *went on to play every hole. D.j.s are usually* on the premises, but there is live music Mondays after ten.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**JEFF HARNAR,** who will be performing here through Feb. 10, will sing a number with a quiet, gentle lilt, then drop his voice down low and belt out the next with a vibrato that could shake a diploma off a wall. His show, a manic evening of Comden and Green, includes just the right amount of bad jokes and over-the-top theatrics, as well as some nice musical surprises (a doo-wop version of "Never, Never Land," for one) and some extended medleys that are inventive to the point of being pathological. Harnar, who seems to be following in the outsize-publicity footsteps of elder statesmen Michael Feinstein and Harry Connick, Jr., performs with a ceaseless, count-my-fillings-I-don't-care smile, and does some nicely choreographed goofing around with his accompanist and musical director, Alex Rybeck. One of the few disappointments is that Harnar's performance seems a bit overextended: a little Comden and Green may go a long way, but a lot of Comden and Green doesn't go much farther. Harnar can be heard Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—The jazz personnel turns over nearly every night at this airy, loftlike restaurant-bar, in the gray zone between Zabar's and Columbia. Some may cry gentrification at the sight of the pastel walls, the potted greenery, and the bar crowded with Frascati sippers, but the floor-to-ceiling windows make for some fine Broadway-viewing. **HUGH MASEKELA,** the expatriate South African flugelhornist, whose reach stretches from the African style called mbaqanga to contemporary jazz, takes charge on Jan. 31. The pianist **JAMES WILLIAMS,** a cheerful, percussive player and, like half the musicians in town, it seems, an Art Blakey protégé, goes to work Feb. 1-3. Music from nine Sundays through Thursdays and from nine-thirty Fridays and Saturdays. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. **STANLEY JORDAN,** a young guitarist who taps the fretboard with all ten fingers, making his instrument sound like a piano, is in action Jan. 30-Feb. 4. **TITO PUENTE,** the white-haired timbales player, bandleader, and all-around salsa star, shows up for six nights beginning Feb. 6. Puente has a repertoire of comic gestures—brushing his hair with a drumstick during a solo, swaying his hips like Jackie Gleason doing the mambo. Conga player **MONGO SANTAMARIA** and his combo are also on the bill. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—A big, pleasant room where they pack them in until someone says uncle. The walls and columns are basic black with some rainbow detailing here and there—the place looks a little like the outside of a van. If you end up without a seat, you can stand at the bar—finally a club where they don't force you to drink—and mull over photographs from great shows you've missed. **BUSTER POINDEXTER,** the pompadoured lounge singer and showman, puts his **BANSHEES OF BLUE** through their paces on Jan. 31. A Poindexter show is a spectacle, and might include such numbers as the soca hit "Hot, Hot, Hot" or his theatrical rendition of "Hit the Road, Jack." **MARSHALL CRENSHAW** makes his long-awaited return to New York Feb. 2-3. The virtuoso jazz-rock guitarist **LARRY CORYELL** begins a two-nighter on Feb. 7. Shows Sundays through Thursdays at eight and eleven, and Fridays and Saturdays at eight-thirty and eleven-thirty. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar, where, if the crowd coöperates, you can hear the beautiful, singular sound of musicians thinking. **MICHAEL WEISS,** a young pianist in the bop tradition, leads a trio (**PETER WASHINGTON** on bass, **KENNY WASHINGTON** on drums) through Feb. 3. Pianist **JAMES WILLIAMS** begins a six-night visit on Feb. 5, with bassist **RAY DRUMMOND.** Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a small, well-upholstered room decorated with quaint Marcel Vertès murals (a nude at her easel, a leaping poodle), is a place where time pretty much stands still. The **MODERN JAZZ QUARTET,** whose admirers span several generations (Milt Jackson, John Lewis, Percy Heath, and Connie Kay have been at it for thirty-one years), continue their engagement here through Feb. 3. Shows Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in a bar whose pillars and walls are decorated with Ludwig Bemelmans park scenes (a man and his bulldog, rabbity creatures at play, schoolchildren and a nun), **FRANK OWENS** is at the piano from nine-forty-five Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—This room, which caters to thrash-metal buffs and cooler heads on weeknights, opens its doors on Sundays to swing-music fans, most of whom come to Lindy. The dancers are young, old, middle-aged, semi-pro, one hundred per cent amateur, happy, earnest, in love; shoe

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NIGHT LIFE—Cont'd

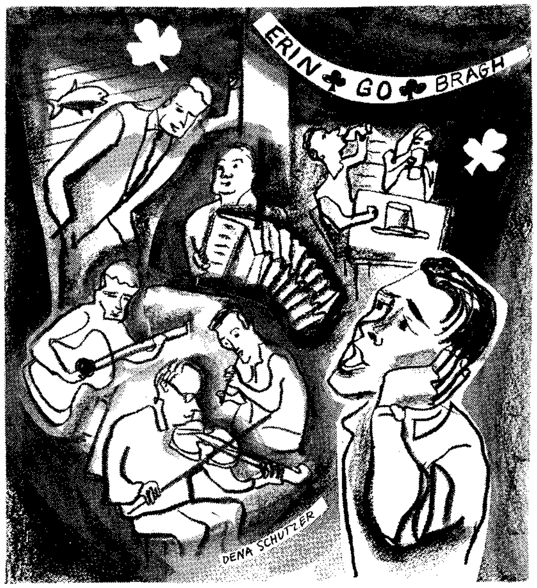
styles (men's) run from white bucks to clodhoppers to gleaming patent-leather jobs. The Harlem Blues and Jazz Band, an outfit composed of eight swing-era veterans, leads the proceedings here on Feb. 4. Music from eight to midnight.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A new, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. In an effort to get patrons close to the action, the owners—one of whom previously owned Sweet Basil and managed Indigo Blues—have crowded Condon's stage with tables. The result is that diners here will either find the atmosphere snug and intimate or spend a lot of time looking for fire exits. **ROLAND HANNA**, a pianist who has served with Sarah Vaughan, the New York Jazz Sextet, and the U.S. Army, has at times in his career been wary of night clubs, preferring to try out original material in concert halls about forty blocks north of what he has referred to as "the smoke and the booze and the 'I don't care.' " In recent years, however, Hanna has been sighted downtown playing everything from ragtime to Miles Davis in top form. He will perform here Jan. 30-Feb. 4; a quartet belonging to Jay Hoggard will start up on Feb. 6. Music begins at ten.

Eagle Tavern, 355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—On Mondays, the back room of this Irish bar is given over to an informal, after-hours-style jam session during which silver-haired singers, fiddlers, and concertina players rumble dreamily through a catalogue of ancient songs about sea captains, sea captains' sweethearts, and other figures of nautical interest. Other Tavern news: Mike Rafferty (flute and uilleann pipes), Mary Rafferty (flute, tin whistle, and button accordion), and Mike Lavery (vocals) will be on the premises on Feb. 2.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. Chuck Loeb, Andy Laverne & Magic Fingers are here Jan. 30-Feb. 4; the group includes David Letterman Band members Will Lee and Anton Fig. Tenor saxophonist **BILL EVANS**, a young jazz-rock practitioner who worked with Miles Davis in the early eighties, directs his quartet from Feb. 6. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL**, the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—A satisfying combination of Chinese food and homegrown music. Rubberneckers may see the moon wheeling by the greenhouse roof on its regular tour of romantic Manhattan. The pianists who pass through here are among Gotham's finest. Jan. 30-Feb. 4 is in the hands of the guitarist **HOWARD ALDEN** and the trombonist **DAN BARRETT**; on Feb. 5, **DON FRIEDMAN** (piano) and **HARVIE SWARTZ** (bass) hold forth; **DAVE MC KENNA**, who has been called in these pages the "hardest-swinging pianist of all time," begins a solo stint on Feb. 6. Music from eight Mondays through Saturdays, and from seven on Sundays.



Irish Night at the Eagle Tavern

Kilimanjaro, 531 W. 19th St. (627-2333)—A recently opened northern branch of the popular Washington, D.C., night spot. As the name suggests, African music is the sine qua non, be it live or d.j.-spun. Calypso, reggae, and world-beat formats also turn up; in any case, the huge dance floor seldom lies fallow. **BABA OLATUNJI**, a Nigerian percussionist who moved to the U.S. in the fifties, where he has since been a leading oracle of African dance and drumming, will be here on Feb. 2.

Lauterbach's Brooklyn Beat, 335 Prospect Ave., at Sixth Ave. (1-718 788-9140)—A grungy but well-intentioned watering hole devoted to homegrown Brooklyn bands. The emphasis here is on exposed cement, although one wall is decorated with Polaroids—"St. Patty's 1986" (people in green hats and leis), "New Year's 1988-89" (people in red hats and leis). Lauterbach's microwave menu includes shepherd's pie and chicken parmigiana, but the musical menu is almost always a better selection.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A cheery, climate-controlled restaurant and bar where a misty-eyed patron was once heard remarking, "I don't know about you people, but I'm feeling a lot of love in this room." **ROOMFUL OF BLUES**, a Rhode Island-based horn outfit, which Count Basie called "the hottest blues band I've ever heard" and which has been giving people happy feet for about twenty years, performs Feb. 2. The **UPTOWN HORNS** go to work on Feb. 3. Music after nine. Dining.

Maxwell's, 1039 Washington St., Hoboken. (1-201 798-4064)—A good sound system, cheap drinks, and a regular-guy atmosphere make this restaurant-bar, home of the "Hoboken sound" and of the phrase "jangly guitars," a popular hangout for musicians and their followers. Manhattanites who stay through the second set will need all their Scout training to get home, but the smell of the nearby Maxwell House factory will no doubt give them a boost.

Rainbow & Stars, 30 Rockefeller Plaza. (632-5000)—A great, pricey cabaret in the sky. The last time **ROSEMARY CLOONEY** sang here, her encore was "Will You Still Be Mine"; and, almost exactly one year later, she has returned to find out. Ms. Clooney—whose voice is somewhat huskier than it once was, but who still makes it all look pretty damn easy—also ran through "Come On-A My House," "Strike Up the Band," and "Manhattan," for which the skyline pitched in some rather nice visuals. The singer's current engagement will run through Feb. 24. Shows are at nine and eleven-fifteen. Dining. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

Savoy Grille, 131 E. 54th St. (593-8800)—A little nest off Lexington for young people on their way home from Madison. The restaurant and bar have a yellowish light that's easy on the eyes; a small dance floor, which love-struck patrons dash to between courses; and earnest waiters who stop just short of acting out the menu. **DICK SUDHALTER**—who plays cornet and flugelhorn, and whose rather involved résumé includes serving as a U.P.I. correspondent, writing a biography of Bix Beiderbecke, and reviewing books for the British magazine *Punch*—leads a trio here as of Feb. 5.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—Until Feb. 4, this Village temple of jazz will be home to a trio led by **TOMMY FLANAGAN**, a sparkling bebop pianist of whom the late Bradley Cunningham once said, "Piano players are supposed to make you laugh, then break your heart, and that's what Tommy does." **JAMES MOODY** starts up on Feb. 6. Trumpeter Miles Evans leads a big band on Mondays. Shows from ten. Dining.

Tramps, 45 W. 21st St. (727-7788)—The old Tramps, a small Irish pub on East 15th Street, closed its doors in 1988, and this new incarnation, located on a Chelsea block that's fast becoming an urban Disneyland (a pool hall, indoor miniature golf, a trendy all-night diner, Limelight around the corner), opened early last year. The place is about the size of a roller rink, and has the converted-loft-space slickness much in evidence downtown lately, but the emphasis on solid rock and blues remains.

Village Gate, 160 Bleecker St. (475-5120)—In the gym-size downstairs room—which, with its black walls, black pillars, and black pipes and ducts, resembles a giant Louise Nevelson sculpture—**THEY MIGHT BE GIANTS** perform Feb. 2-3. The Giants are John Flansburgh and John Linnell, two young men from Lincoln, Massachusetts, who apparently didn't get out of the house enough. The two Johns make pop music that is tricky, clever, and brainy to the hilt, and that can leave the customer feeling giddy and word-sated. They're prolific, too—their repertoire comprises scores of songs, some of which can be heard on their latest album, "Flood." . . . ¶ One flight up, in the airy space known as the Terrace Bar, the Mulgrew Miller duo holds forth Tuesdays through Sundays. **HILTON RUIZ** and **JIMMY ROWSER** claim Mondays.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." Mr. Gordon continued to run the place until his death last year, and always weathered the trials of club ownership with equanimity, whether it was Harry Belafonte's exposed navel (Max didn't approve, but the customers did) or the time Charles Mingus tore off the front door. **KENNY BARRON**, the pianist, composer (for, among others, Dizzy Gillespie and Freddie Hubbard), and professor (he was appointed to the Rutgers faculty in the seventies), brings in a quintet Jan. 30-Feb. 4. **RANDY WESTON**, a Monk-inspired pianist who once ran a night club in Morocco, starts work on Feb. 6, with his African Rhythms Trio. Mondays are in the hands of the **MEL LEWIS** big band. Music starts at ten.

West End, 2911 Broadway, at 113th St. (662-8830)—This café, which was once a well-known haven for those studying pinball, jazz, and other unofficial Columbia University requirements, reopened a couple of weeks back; Feb. 1-4 it's home to an outfit called the Duke's Men. Mondays are the property of a trio made up of organist **MIKE LE DONNE**, alto saxophonist **MIKE HASHIM**, and drummer **KENNY WASHINGTON**. Music after ten.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke-veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad.

Zinno, 126 W. 13th St. (924-5182)—If you like pictures of cows, there's a good one here, by the British painter Malcolm Morley, of some Holsteins adrift in a Turneresque landscape. There's also jazz, which flows peaceably from a passageway between the front-room bar and the back-room restaurant. **JUNIOR MANCE** wrote the book—O.K., *a* book—on blues piano, and he will be here through Feb. 3 citing chapter and verse. Playing with him will be bassist **MARTY RIVERA**. Music weeknights from eight, and Sundays from seven.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

AT 18th Street and Broadway, on a cold Friday night, two homeless veterans thrust foam cups at the driver's sides of Saabs and Acuras, asking for alms, while a third ransacked a trash bin for recyclable soda cans. Most car windows stayed closed. Couples heading out from the new Loews multiplex up the avenue reacted to this cast of scavengers as if they were more of an eyesore than what they had already seen in "Harlem Nights" (no way). You needed to walk only two blocks west, however, past the lit-like-a-movie-première water-main break on Fifth Avenue, to be reminded that everything—beauty, class, style, even rummaging through garbage—is relative.

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"I got it!" cried a woman in a full-length fox coat as she clutched a slightly warped copy of "The Complete Works of Lewis Carroll" while standing in a dumpster in front of Academy Books that was half filled with water-damaged volumes. "All it needs is a couple of days next to the radiator squashed under Webster's New Collegiate. Give me a hand. My heel is caught in some damn art book," she said to her sidewalk-bound, Burberry-trenched friend, who was straining so desperately to reach Iris Murdoch's "The Good Apprentice" that he was unaware that his elbow was resting smack in the middle of the droppings of some sizable animal. (How a four-footer this large wound up on the rim of the dumpster is one of the wonders of urban survival.)

Yet even if her friend had settled for the easier-to-procure book of poems by Marianne Moore, the foxy lady would have had to fend for herself, because the site was totally encircled by people trying to balance Barneys and Matsuda bags in one hand with free reads in the other. The only person successfully pushing his way through was the obviously less than pleased Academy Books helper operating as a one-man bucket brigade, tossing trash can after trash can of ruined hardcovers into the dumpster. Batches that included Mark Twain or coffee-table-size portraiture incited new activity. Remainders of "Psycho-Myth, Psycho-History" brought groans. "Will you be bringing up any Updike?" one woman asked him. He kept on walking. "What a shame," said her friend, who already had four books under her arm and was rummaging for more. But didn't she feel weird sifting through a germ-filled receptacle? "For what it's costing me, why not? Who's it hurting?"

IN ANOTHER CATEGORY—PERFORMANCE ART, ETC.

Moscow Circus—With acrobats, aerialists, tiger tamers, and, of course, dancing bears. Performances wind up on Feb. 4. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. For information about show times and tickets, call 247-4777.)

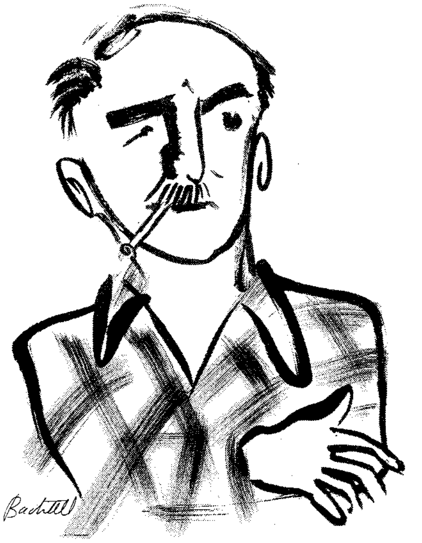
Ice Capades—The fiftieth-anniversary version, with Barbie and Super Mario Bros. (Meadowlands Arena. Jan. 30 at 7:30; Jan. 31 and Feb. 1 at 10:30 and 7:30; Feb. 2 at 7:30; Feb. 3 at 11, 3, and 7:30; and Feb. 4 at 1:30 and 5:30. For information about tickets, call 1-201 935-3900.)

Marty Pottenger—A performance artist who has also been a construction worker for seventeen years, Ms. Pottenger recounts her experiences in "The Construction Stories." (Dance Theatre Workshop, 219 W. 19th St. 924-0077. Feb. 2-3 at 11.)

Peggy Pettit—In "Women Preachers," a performance work about the experiences of African-American women. (Franklin Furnace, 112 Franklin St. 925-4671. Feb. 3 at 8.)

La Mama—Jan. 31-Feb. 4 at 7:30: The Otrabanda Company in "Juice," a performance about health nuts of the future. . . . ¶ Feb. 1-3 at 10: Penny Arcade in a new show, "Based on a True Story." With Alan Midgette, Deborah Margolin, and others. (74A E. 4th St. 477-7710.)

P. S. 122—The tenth annual anniversary performances. This time, with Reno, Ain Gordon, Bill T. Jones / Arnie Zane & Co., Philip Glass, Eric Bogosian, Ethyl Eichelberger, Carmelita Tropicana, Spalding Gray, and others. (150 First Ave., at 9th St. 477-5288. Feb. 1 and Feb. 4 at 8, and Feb. 2-3 at 8 and 11.)



Milton Avery

ART

"THE NEW BRITISH PAINTING," an exhibition on view at the Queens Museum through March 18, could be seen as a great big rebuke to Margaret Thatcher. Viewers may get the feeling that they have gone back to a future of Dickensian woes, of Depression-era specialties such as Expressionistic satire, Magic Realism, and socialist allegory, and of the gallows humor and product-hungry esprit de corps that are synonymous with the British postwar period and its infamous rationing. Even the most nearly abstract works in this overwhelmingly figurative pictorial gabfest—by Thérèse Oulton, Christopher Le Brun, and Tim Head—bespeak some form or other of cultural rot; even the most coolly cerebral, such as Mark Wallinger's impressive, emblematic lampoons, inflict a burn. Ken Currie, for instance, is a Scot born in 1960, and his "Workshop of the World (Hope and Optimism in Spite of Present Difficulties)" and "In the City Bar" positively erupt with the spirit of nineteen-thirties radical unionism, as well as with the more cynically urbane but equally caustic and implosive mood of early-eighties paintings by the considerably older East German Jörg Immendorff. Stephen Conroy (b. 1964), also a Scot, paints neo-Victorian, workaday visions of tight-lipped, buttoned-up young men in close, heavily atmospheric, seemingly gaslit interiors that evoke Walter Sickert, along with Degas in his most sombre, Zola-conscious moments. Another Scot, Jock McFadyen (b. 1950), is represented by paintings such as "Parade," a procession of lewdly grotesque worthies worthy of George Grosz, set against a thin, vaporous background. For all the gloom, the participation of so many interesting artists born and/or schooled in Glasgow (the popular Steven Campbell, among others) confirms all happy reports that from that once moribund city has risen a major cultural center. It would also seem that young Scottish artists in Great Britain today have, as a Jean Brodie might put it, become the crème de la crème.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—Perhaps the most evocative thing in the museum's wonderful, low-key Pierre Bonnard exhibition (mostly of early graphic work, but some paintings are included as well) is a program cover he drew for a concert at the Villa Bach, in the classic French family resort of Arcachon, near Bordeaux. Villa Bach was the house of his sister Andrée and her husband, the composer Claude Terrasse, and Bonnard's invitation shows you the driveway that lets you in. Through Feb. 4. . . . ¶ "The Age of Napoleon" is the best exhibition the Costume Institute has put on in some time. Katell Le Bourhis, the Institute's talented new curator, worked with Diana Vreeland, and it shows. Through April 15. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—In Vernon Fisher's newest installation—a complicated amalgam of wall drawings, paintings, texts, surveyor's equipment, a mirror, a sliced wall, and an anamorphic projection of a Dalmatian—the Texas artist wittily and poetically examines the breakdown of theory by pitting systems of representation and thought against each other. Through March 6. . . . ¶ A fine show of Kayserzinn pewter, including unfussy teapots and biscuit jars made between 1900 and 1904 by the German firm J. P. Kayser Sohn. Through Feb. 6. . . . ¶ Photographs by Tina Barney. Through April 10. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—Jenny Holzer illumines Mr. Wright's daunting space with her aphorisms, which are engraved on both red and white granite benches and displayed on a five-hundred-and-thirty-five-foot electronic message unit that follows the contours of the museum's spiralling wall. Through Feb. 25. (Another of Holzer's installation works, "Laments," can be seen at Dia Art Foundation, 548 W. 22nd St.) (Open Tuesdays, 11 to 7:45, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Sundays, 11 to 4:45.)

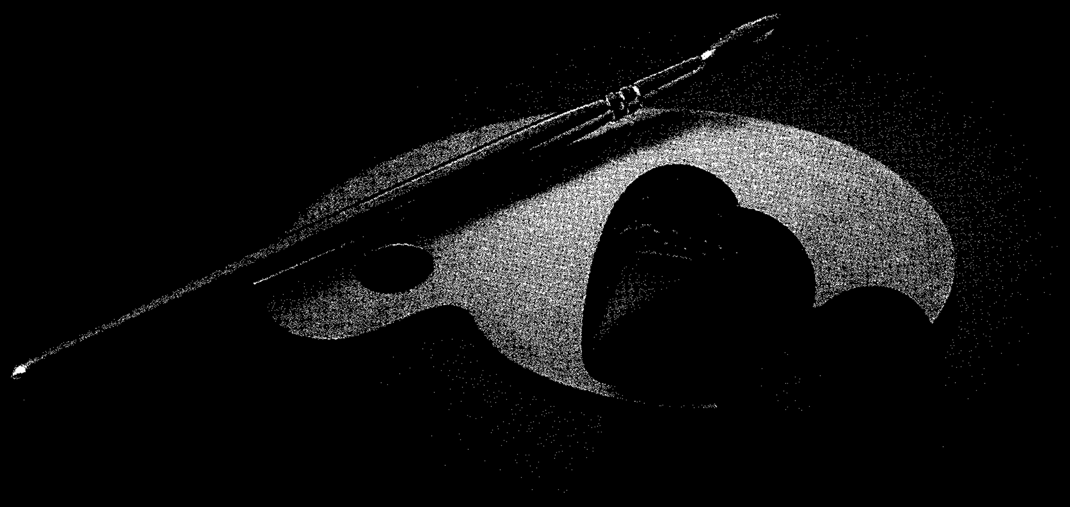
Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The premise of "Image World: Art and Media Culture"—"that the overpowering presence of the media has produced an 'image world' "—is about as sprightly as the Oldest Living Confederate Widow could expect to be. Nevertheless, many individual pieces, such as the lobby "Ticket Booth," by Dennis Adams, which puts the Whitney's ticket-taking docents in a "homeless" frieze, are terrific. Through Feb. 18. . . . ¶ A retrospective of paintings by Thomas Hart Benton (1889-1975). Through Feb. 11. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—A show of seventy costumes from three leading Belle Époque Paris couture houses: Worth, Doucet, and Pingat. Through Feb. 26. . . . ¶ "A Hair's Breadth," David Mach's site-specific installation (it incorporates two of the museum's columns), made of fifty tons of magazines, is on view in the lobby through March 5. (Open daily, except Tuesdays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—A show of six complete Ice Age skeletons—including those of two wolves, a sabre-toothed cat, and a thirty-five-hundred-pound sloth—that were exhumed from the La Brea Tar Pits, in Los Angeles. Also on display are smaller fossils of reptiles, birds, and the cast skull of the nine-thousand-year-old so-called La Brea Woman, the only human representative from the tar pits. Through April 1. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, 10 to 9; Fridays and Saturdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge after 5.)

Asia Society, Park Ave. at 70th St.—A show of Buddhist art from Bhutan's temples and monasteries. Included are several *thankas* (large hanging scrolls), two cast-bronze prayer wheels, and a painted altar created specifically for the show. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 6; Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—A show of poignant large-scale photographs on canvas, with minimal painted interventions, by Annette Lemieux. They depict the "appearance" of sound—deaf children with their heads on a piano, say, or a waterfall, the bomb, Edgar Bergen and his wooden other. Even the noise from an adjacent screening of



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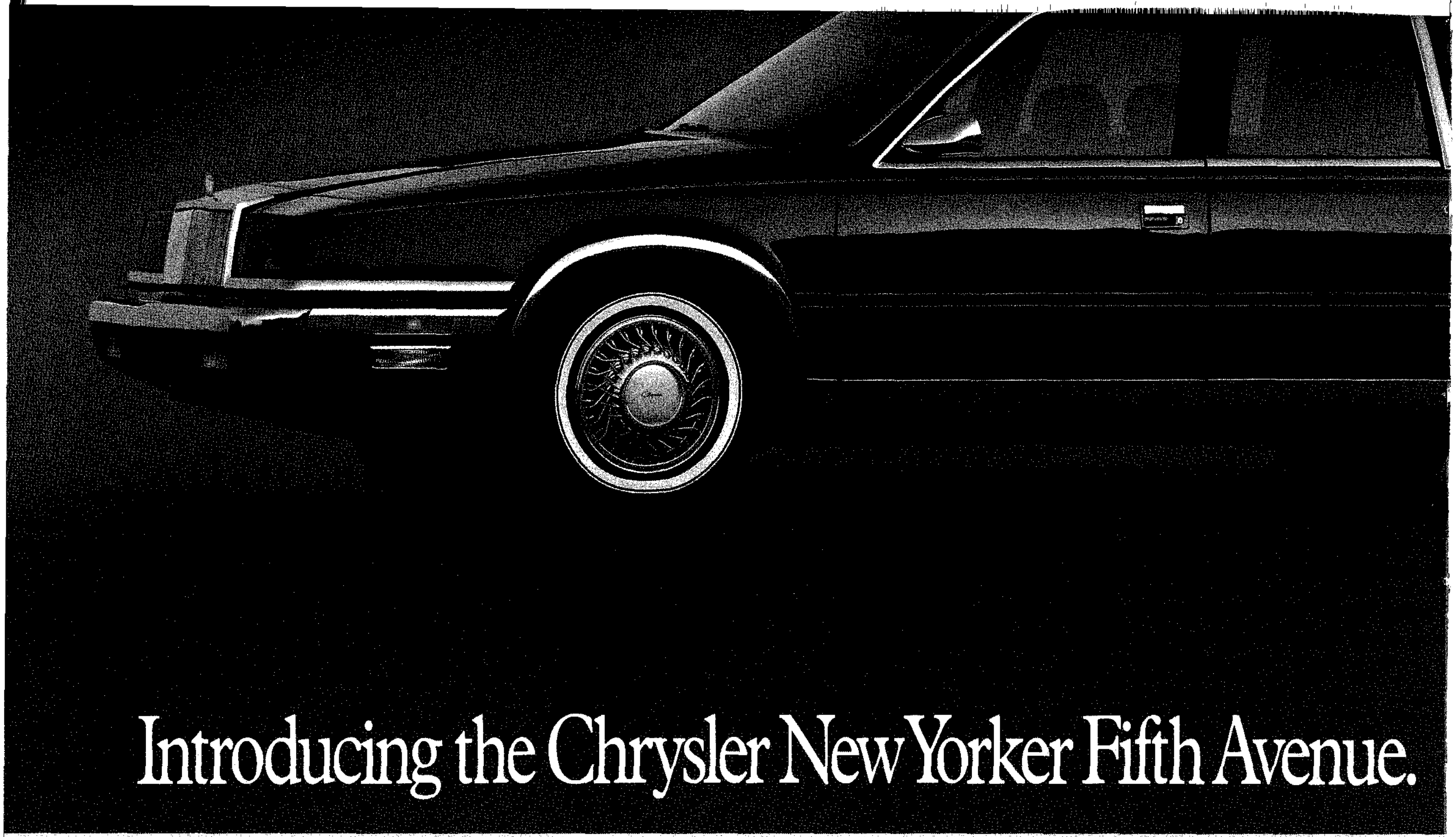

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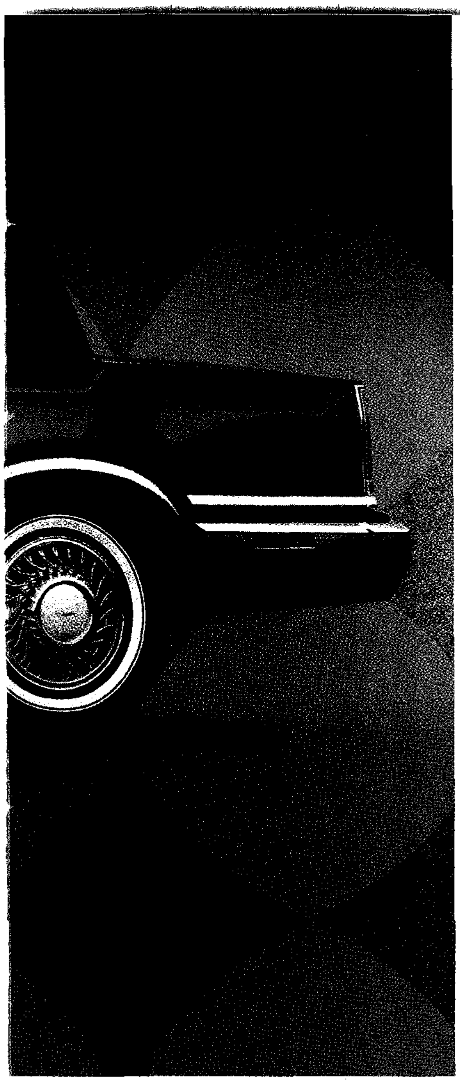

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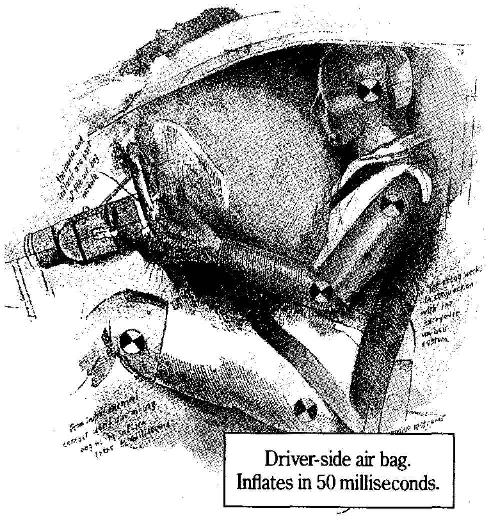

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

Australian videos is somehow silenced by these humbly beautiful works about memory and loss. . . . ¶ A collaborative installation by Martha Fleming and Lyne Lapointe that was inspired by a poem by Christina Rossetti and is intended to be about women's pleasures. However, with its use of Adirondack rusticity —paintings of bugs, squirrels, and bats, a mosaic floor, log benches, a worn balustrade, cozy country floor lamps, and much bark—it looks like an elaborate reprocessing of stick art. Both shows through Feb. 4. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. —An exhibition from the Berg Collection of rare books, manuscripts, and letters having to do with the abolitionist movement in the nineteenth century. Among the items on display are a broadside, printed on satin, of the declaration of the first National Anti-Slavery Convention, in 1833, and a copy of a handbill by Henry David Thoreau announcing a memorial service for John Brown. Some of the authors represented are Langston Hughes, Countee Cullen, James Baldwin, and Richard Wright. Starts Feb. 2. (Berg Collection Exhibition Room. Open daily, except Thursdays and Sundays, 10 to 6.)

Queens Museum, Flushing Meadow Park, Flushing—"The New British Painting." Through March 18. (Open Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, 10 to 5; Thursdays, 10 to 8; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5:30.)

Studio Museum in Harlem, 144 W. 125th St.— This show of contemporary sub-Saharan African art should inspire serious rethinking of such issues as cultural imperialism and the function of art within a society. It does not, however, enrich our understanding of the confluence of art and culture in contemporary Africa, nor does it present a set of issues, visions of stirring beauty, or a window onto a world about which Western artists have fantasized throughout the century. Some of the nine artists—from Ghana, Zimbabwe, Senegal, and elsewhere—were educated in European traditions, but, according to the exhibition catalogue, many of the painting and sculpture methods they use are rooted in African culture. Whatever its intentions, most of the show looks familiar, and not compellingly so. Exceptions include the work of Tapfuma Gutsa, from Zimbabwe, who takes on Western sculpture much as the Cubists took on African tribal artifacts—he puts Brancusi and the Venus of Willendorf to good use. And Rosemary Karuga, a Kenyan, makes charming figurative collages out of colorful little bits of cut-up magazines. (Open Wednesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 1 to 6.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Bob Thompson (1937-66)—Perhaps this African-American artist did not live long enough for his work to reach maturity: his paintings seem too heavily influenced by others. The stormier (and stronger) ones are like Kandinsky's in imagery and composition, although they are more representational. Most of the others are lollipop pseudo-primitive Fauvism, to which a touch of Munch isolation has been added. Through Feb. 24. (Vanderwoude Tananbaum, 24 E. 81st St.)

"Helen Serger, 1901-89: A Memorial Exhibition"— This dealer of interwar European art (the emphasis here is on the Viennese and the German avant-garde) is honored with an exhibition from her private collection of paintings, sculptures, and works on paper. As a collector she was not concerned with amassing masterpieces or constructing a historical view but was clearly committed to a personal experience with art. Among the many fine works on paper are those by Léger, Schiele, Rouault, Chagall, and Kokoschka. Through Feb. 10. (La Boetie, 9 E. 82nd St.)

Group Show—An assortment of high-quality and mostly low-interest Old Master paintings from the fourteenth century through the eighteenth. There's a nice Boucher "Venus and Cupid," a theatrical "Mediterranean Harbor Scene," by Hendrik Van Minderhout (1632-1696), with dressed-up monkeys and a camel by the sea, and a rather sinister, pagan-looking "St. Bartholomew" by Bernardo Cavallino (1616-56). Through Feb. 16. (Colnaghi, 21 E. 67th St.)

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HOT SPOTS

Rural architecture has come to Manhattan. In the past three months, eight wood toolsheds have been planted on city sidewalks: six in the Grand Central area, one on East 59th Street, and one near City Hall. Built by a Connecticut company called the Barn Yard, they resemble outhouses, or county-fair ticket booths, or perhaps roadside shrines. They actually contain carbon-monoxide monitors. The Department of Environmental Protection is using them to test its "deep-canyon" theory, which posits—not implausibly—that narrow, traffic-clogged streets walled by tall buildings are prone to heavy pollution. The monitors will start operating during the next month, and the structures will remain in place for one year.

Some people have protested that these outdoor laboratories take up too much sidewalk space, and that they are an eyesore, but the chain-link fences that surround the sheds have a gritty charm. They resemble kennels, and, should the department feel so inclined, a small dog cutout placed inside could entertain passersby.

Short List—**bruno lucchesi,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through Feb. 3); **john moore,** Hirschl & Adler Modern, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St. (open Mondays, through Feb. 2).

GALLERIES—57th STREET AREA

S. Adam—Bold, cold, slickly generic abstract paintings. This artist seems to derive pleasure mainly from the smooth application of bright paint and, perhaps, from the sound of masking tape ripping away to create "edge." Through Feb. 7. (Babcock, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Milton Avery (1893-1965)—Many minor watercolor landscapes and some fine figure drawings. Through Feb. 3. (Borgenicht, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St.)

Al Held—These cake-frosting-thick paintings in deep colors were made between 1953 and 1955, after the artist had returned to New York from Paris, and are chock-full of youth and possibility. They owe some of their boundless virility to the Abstract Expressionists and the postwar Parisian painters. Through Feb. 3. (Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St.)

Shirley Jaffe / Cora Cohen—Joyful paintings bearing the strong influence of Matisse's cut-outs, by a sixty-six-year-old American living in Paris. / Recent abstract paintings: quiet, relaxed, subtle, subdued, and ever so slightly steamy. Through Feb. 10. (Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

Catherine Lee—Large, vaguely figurative shapes composed of two or three juxtaposed bronze pieces, each patinaed differently. Well done with a little too much effort. Through Feb. 10. (Marisa del Re, 41 E. 57th St.)

Mark Rothko (1903-70)—Gorgeous paintings, made in 1946-48, that are full of change and possibility, while remaining contemplative and assured. The color is brilliant, and the paintings are filled with light. There are reminders here of Styll, Gottlieb, and the pre-monochrome Reinhardt, as well as the stain paintings of Frankenthaler and Louis. The show offers a convincing argument that this "transitional" period of Rothko's is a haven of its own. Through Feb. 10. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Short List—**stanley boxer,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through Feb. 3.); **kenneth callahan** and **gifford beal,** Kraushaar, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 10); **andy warhol,** McCoy, 41 E. 57th St. (through March 1).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Suzanne Anker—A craggy twig cast in bronze, a fan-shaped section of honeycomb, and a copper bowl filled with ash-encrusted duck eggs are among the beautiful objects that pluck nostalgia's strings and then fade from memory. Through Feb. 10. (Greenberg Wilson, 560 Broadway.)

Ed Baynard—"AIDS Requiem" is a series of "precariously balanced sculptures," such as a large iron cross held erect by three strands of rope connected to three distant rocks. It's a nice idea, as we know from Richard Serra, and it's particularly appropriate to AIDS and the precariousness of life, and, in another sense, to the fragility of art in the face of a mortal threat. However, a good idea does not an art work make. Equally thin are scratch paintings of urns and constructions with daggers. Through Feb. 8. (Pfeifer, 568 Broadway.)

Beverly Buchanan—Two photographs of an elderly black woman on the porch of her backwoods shack and a text by the artist eloquently demonstrate her interest in shacks. The remaining works, however, which are drawings and sculptures of similar structures, do no further justice to the artist's fascination with her subject. Through Feb. 6. (Steinbaum, 132 Greene St.)

Simon Faibisovich—Solid Soviet realistic paintings. Through Feb. 14. (Kind, 136 Greene St.)

Gretchen Faust—A quite foxy installation of discreetly nestled brass plaques that suggest the workings of a non-bombastic disciple of James Lee Byars, or of a Jenny Holzer without words. Through Feb. 3. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St.)

Félix González-Torres—The Andrea Rosen gallery's inaugural exhibition is of work by an artist who produces spare, clean, Judd-like shapes by means of stacked sheets suggesting giant Xerox paper. Some bare messages can be peeled off by viewers page by page. This is cool, information-age minimalism, but González-Torres has been getting hot. Through Feb. 24. (Rosen, 130 Prince St.)

David Hacker—Abstract, somewhat opulent, heavily framed drawings in a vaguely Schnabelesque vein. These new works are fluent and good-looking but seem stuck in some narcissistic phase of internal development. Through Feb. 3. (Plumb, 81 Greene St.)

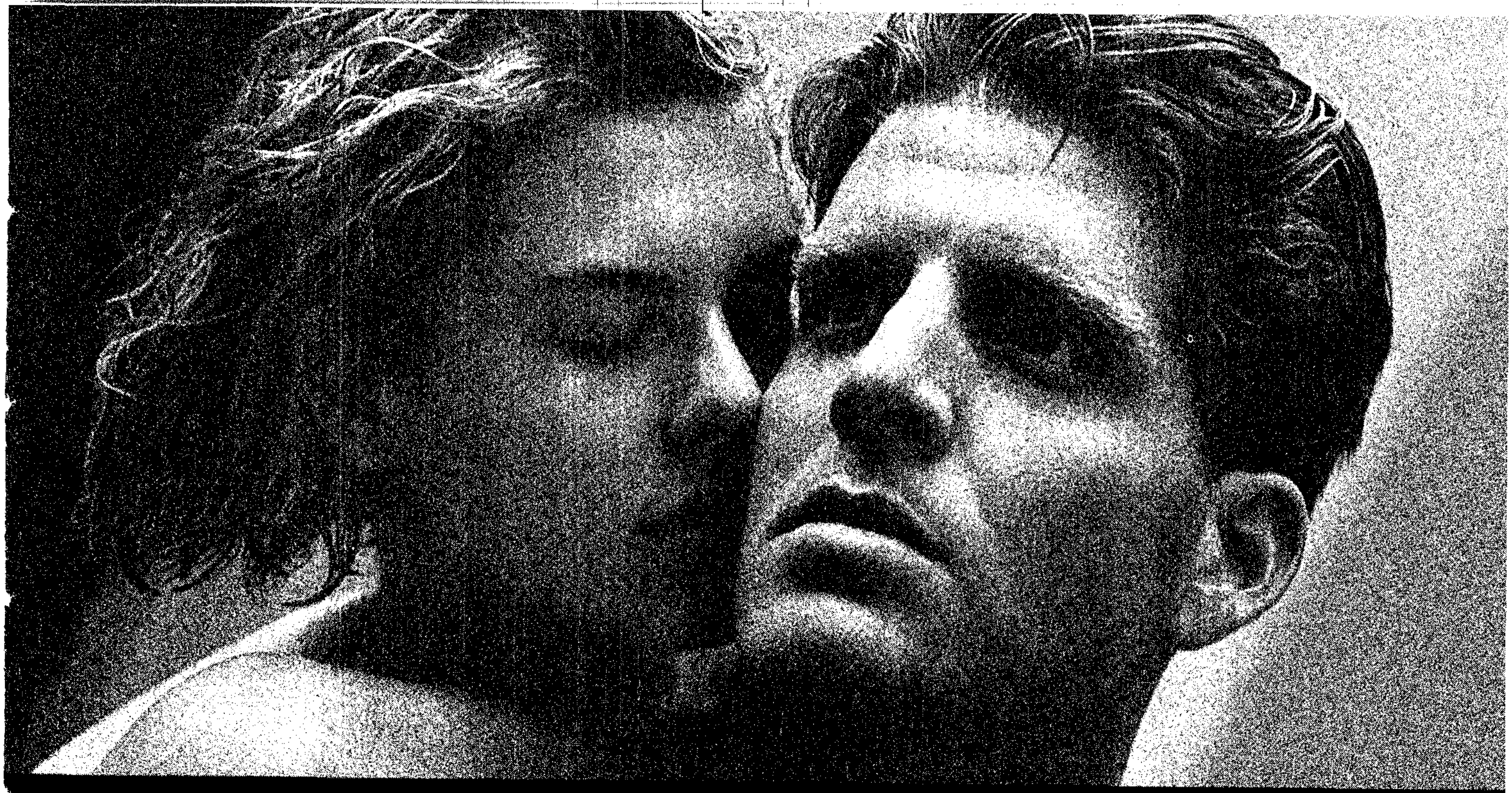
Fariba Hajamadi—Ultra-arty symmetrical diptychs and triptychs, with images developed photographically on canvas or wood, and then painted over. They depict European museums, chapels, and other rarefied rooms of yore. It's a sealed world presented in a disturbingly subtle and voyeuristic way, revealing the artist as either a hopeless romantic or a hopeless cynic. Through Feb. 10. (Burgin, 130 Prince St.)

Ilya Kabakov—This influential Soviet conceptualist's sequence of three highly ambitious installations is undoubtedly the most captivating and communicative of the recent spate of New York *perestroika* shows. One consists of a seemingly endless labyrinth of crumbling hallways, lined with pages from the artist's mother's diary, coupled with snapshots of a picturesque tourism at odds with her difficult life. Through Feb. 3. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St.)

Barry Le Va—Handsome drawings for recent installations that reveal an eccentric and sculptural direction. Through Feb. 3. (Nolan, 560 Broadway.)

Giulio Paolini—This is hardly the artist's most sumptuous work, but it communicates efficiently his role as magician. In a cycle of drawings and slide projections, sight lines radiate from the eyes of a figure, lifted from an eighteenth-century etching, to rectangles drawn in space. Each drawing is a marker for a work yet to be made, and the whole is a touching, if somewhat detached, portrait of melancholy. Through Feb. 24. (Stein-Gladstone, 99 Wooster St.)

Peter Schuyff—A terrific little show consisting of wittily gauged geometric patterns and



Tuscany

Body
and
soul

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sundry graphic inflections painted over some lush, competent, amusingly academic watercolors the artist got from a Sunday painter he came across in his ongoing hunt for inspiring "found" material. Several of these pieces seem to poke fun at late Picabias, early Salles, and other things recently in fashion. Through Feb. 8. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

Peter Shelton—A sculptor who has a real knack for depicting mass, weight, and their ethereality. Upon entering the gallery the viewer is confronted with two cast-iron objects, suspended by cables that disappear over a wall blocking the view into the main gallery. They are wonderfully suggestive. Beyond the wall is a massive, suspended shoji-screen structure shaped like a human body that sways as viewers walk through its corridors. The construction is surrounded by steel and cast-iron objects—a cot, a chest of drawers, a skeleton, a heap of "A"s and "H"s, and other, more abstract forms—that fail to lift the handsome work above its own gimmickry. Through Feb. 3. (Louver, 130 Prince St.)

Kevin Wolff and Peter Huttinger—An interesting double show of works by two younger artists, both quite academic but in very different ways. Wolff paints nude figures in strenuous, sometimes startling poses, which display both Philip Pearlstein's naked-bulb verismo and kinky touches à la David Salle—a male nude wearing socks, for instance. Huttinger's small, tense assemblages, made from animal "guts," have the colors and textures of parchment and dried blood, and suggest the possible influence of Hermann Nitsch, the late Paul Thek, and other high priests of carny gore. Through Feb. 3. (Feature, 484 Broome St.)

"About Nature: A Romantic Impulse"—This thoughtful installment on the subject that has become the theme for the never-ending group show does not focus on the usual list of would-be cultural commentators. For each of these artists—painters, sculptors, a neo-conceptualist using photography—nature is at once alien, unknowable, and a source of endless curiosity. David Nyzio, one of the more interesting science-experiment-as-art practitioners, has us observing growing algae as if we were gazing into a crystal ball. Christopher Williams presents photographs *of exotic flowers from political hot spots in* the form of anatomically accurate glass models at a botanical museum. Through Feb. 10. (Toll, 146 Greene St.)

Group Shows—At the **ala,** 560 Broadway: Fine dreamy installation works made by four major Arte Povera artists between 1977 and 1980, including a brooding Kounellis about banditry, youth, and truncated memory; a typical Paolini classical-art murder mystery; an anxiety-filled Merz virility obsession; and a wacky, straight-faced Fabro. Through Feb. 3. . . . **germans van eck,** 420 West Broadway: Works by artists who use drawing as their primary medium. Included are Nancy Spero's alarming examination of torture in Chile and some very minor Jonathan Borofskys. Through Feb. 10. . . . **gladstone,** 99 Greene St.: A high-class gathering of works by masters of European funk—Dieter Roth and the late great Marcels, Duchamp and Broodthaers. Some of the more scrumptious entries include Broodthaers' brown leather doctor's bag full of white eggshells, and a fading, flaking chocolate puppy dog by Roth. Through Feb. 10.

OTHER GALLERIES

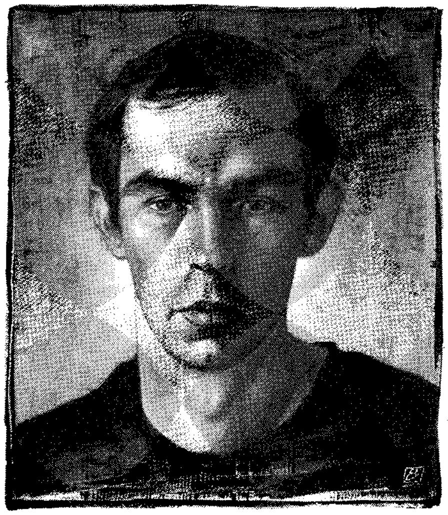
Dara Birnbaum—Video and sculpture come together in a subtle, ethereal way in this show, and the results are glorious—the artist's finest work. In four groupings, minuscule liquid-crystal Sony monitors and videodisk decks hang on L-shaped tubular structures, like airy Bauhaus lighting fixtures, and are flanked by suspended wedge-shaped speakers. The videos' subject is the student protests in Tiananmen Square, and a different aspect of these events is offered in each grouping. Through Feb. 10. (Baer, 270 Lafayette St.)

P.S. 1—*This once funky and by now venerable* schoolhouse/*Kunsthaus* is in full and very professional form these days. For instance, on view to one side of the main galleries on the first floor are early works and recent enamelled paintings by Marcia Hafif, in austere groupings and highly refined one-color chromatic progressions. On the other side, Stephen Prina's more self-consciously deadpan "*Monochrome Paintings*" *form a Stations of* the Cross made up of fourteen evocatively "empty" but accurately formatted painted stand-ins for important work in the history of twentieth-century monochromatic abstraction, by artists such as Kasimir Malevich, Ad Reinhardt, Robert Ryman, and Brice Marden. The signage, logo, poster, and catalogue are part of this ontologically minded prankster's surprisingly engaging installation. Through March 11. (46-01 21st St., Long Island City. Open Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 6.)

"Societal Images"—Craig Kalpakjian's bulletproof teller stations and John Lekay's syringe in a sealed vitrine are rehashed neo-conceptualism, low on concept. Kenneth Goldsmith's large wood books with adlike quotes carved into them are senselessly labor-intensive. Dennis Thomas and Day Gleeson's takeoff on panoramic photo collages connects a frieze of magazine ads along a seamless, ever-transforming horizon line; it's as slick as the ads, with something to admire, but with little to ponder. Through Feb. 11. (White Columns, 142-54 Christopher St. Opens at noon Wednesdays through Sundays.)

"The Clinic"—This varied show brings together many different kinds of art whose subject is hyperconsciousness about the human body. The works span a dozen years (the earliest is a Cindy Sherman photo) and include bronze plaques by Jenny Holzer and photographs by Andres Serrano and by Thomas Ruff. Nayland Blake's neat construction of cleaning materials with a sexual edge conjures up "A Clockwork Orange"; Lutz Bacher's videotape of a uterine operation, with a soundtrack that has the bedtime tone of a self-hypnosis tape, is the most perverse work; Robert Gober's sculpture of a corner sink with unplugged orifices is the most brooding. Through Feb. 10. (Simon Watson, 241 Lafayette St.)

Small Works Show—The fourteenth annual competition, this year juried by Ivan Karp. Starts Feb. 3. (80 Washington Square East Galleries, New York University.)



Peter Hujar

PHOTOGRAPHY

For anyone who has been watching in the past few years, it has been possible to get to know John Coplans' body as intimately as one's own. Coplans has had various exhibitions of self-portraits that offer views of his naked being from head to toe—to the point that some observers have said "all right already." But the obvious narcissism of Coplans' self-examinations has been balanced by what he shows—a body past its prime, with a paunch. We look at him on his way to being an old man whose photographic self-presentations are touching because they project a mixture of aggressiveness and a sense of mortality.

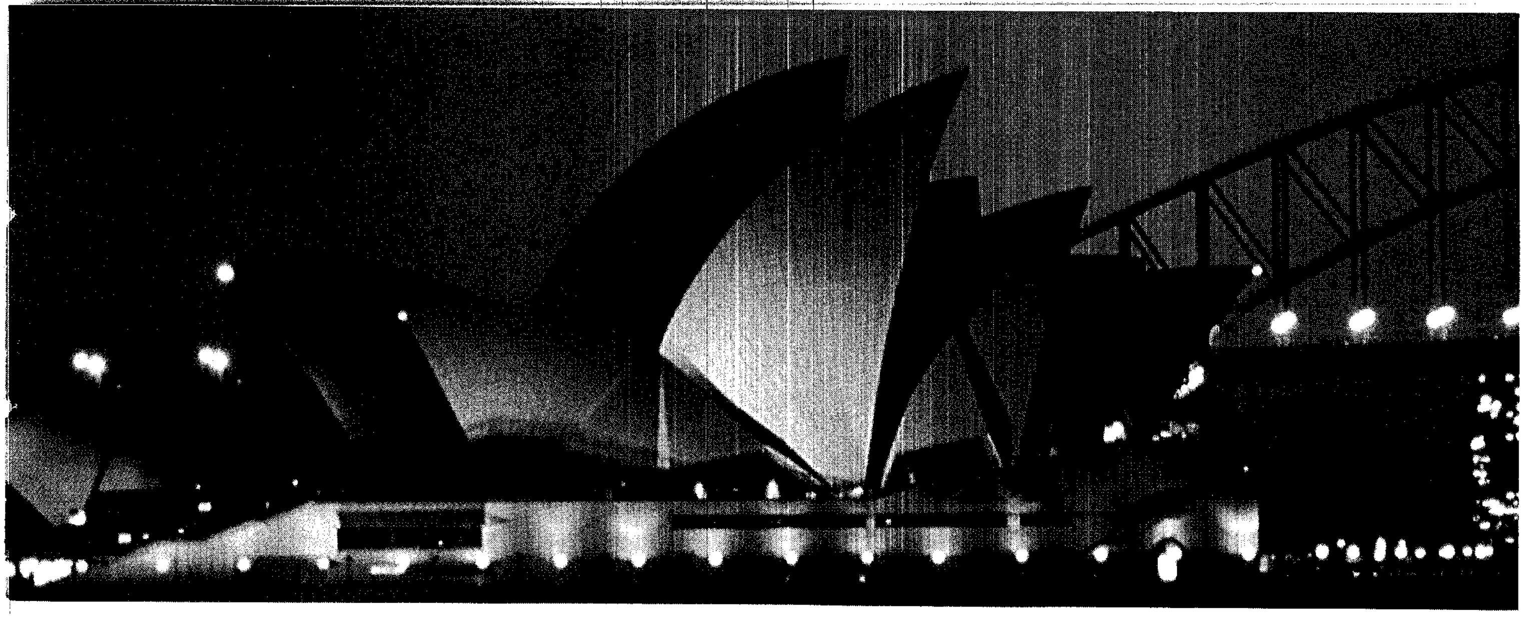
Now, at Galerie Lelong, on 57th Street, we can see an entire exhibition of Coplans' photographs of his feet (some of which include a show of ankle, but none of which go higher than his lower calf). This time last year, the same gallery put up an equivalent show by Coplans, called "Hand," made up of single images rather than groups of images, which is how the photographer is arranging much of his work now. "Foot," like "Hand," is an impressive display of photography. The magnetism of this work is in part due to Coplans' "Gulliver's Travels"-like approach—his scaling up of his body, making it seem both surreal and hyperreal, as if it were both figurative art and landscape art. But these pictures don't get their power merely from the fact that Coplans magnifies himself; we've seen a lot of bigger-than-life upscaling of the body in the art of the last decade. What makes Coplans' work original and strong is his fine use of sculptural form combined with his refusal to be afraid of so-called ugliness. Some of his pieces epitomize the teen term "gross"—don't go if you want to look at pretty toes.

Bernd and Hilla Becher—Sixty-four exquisitely printed black-and-white photographs taken over the past twenty-five years. The images are of familiar-looking exposed industrial structures—gas tanks, grain elevators, water towers—and there is a particularly compelling group of fifteen "Blast Furnaces" that hits you with the emotional impact of an epic series of figure studies by Philip Guston. The Bechers' unpopulated visions, with their chilling, thrilling human echoes, put viewers into the Beckettian roles of God and dog—between a rock and a hard, fast place. Through *June 22. (Dia Art Foundation,* 548 W. 22nd St. Opens at noon Thursdays through Sundays.)

Cindy Sherman—You don't have to go to the Met this week in order to see Renaissance art. Photography's Renaissance woman has come up with a group of works that suggest that, for the duration of this show, her gallery, Metro Pictures, should change its name to Museum Pictures. Each photograph looks like a famous masterpiece (by, say, Raphael, Ingres, Caravaggio, or Holbein) but in fact isn't a copy of any existing work. As usual, she uses herself as her model, and even though her props—false noses, falsies, masks, drapes—are low budget, she somehow manages to come up with finished products that are beyond trompe-l'oeil. Through Feb. 3. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Magnum Photographers—More than three hundred black-and-white and color works by sixty past and present members of the coöperative. Through Feb. 4. (International Center of Photography Midtown, Sixth Ave. at 43rd St. Daily, except Mondays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 8.)

Short List—**tina barney,** Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St. (through April 10); **nancy burson,** Baum, 588 Broadway (open Mondays, through Feb. 10); **peter campus,** Cooper, 155 Wooster St. (starts Feb. 3); **john coplans,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through Feb. 10); **hans danuser,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through Feb. 3); **mario giacomelli,** Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through Feb. 10); **jan groover,** Borden, 560 Broadway (through Feb. 12); **peter hujar,** Grey Art Gallery, New York University, 33 Washington Pl. (opens Saturdays at 1, through Feb. 24); **irene pletka,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (through Feb. 10); **olivier richon,** Shainman, 560 Broadway (through Feb. 3); **henry peach robinson** and **douglas kirkland,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge after 5; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6, through Feb. 25); **hannah villiger,** Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (through Feb. 10).



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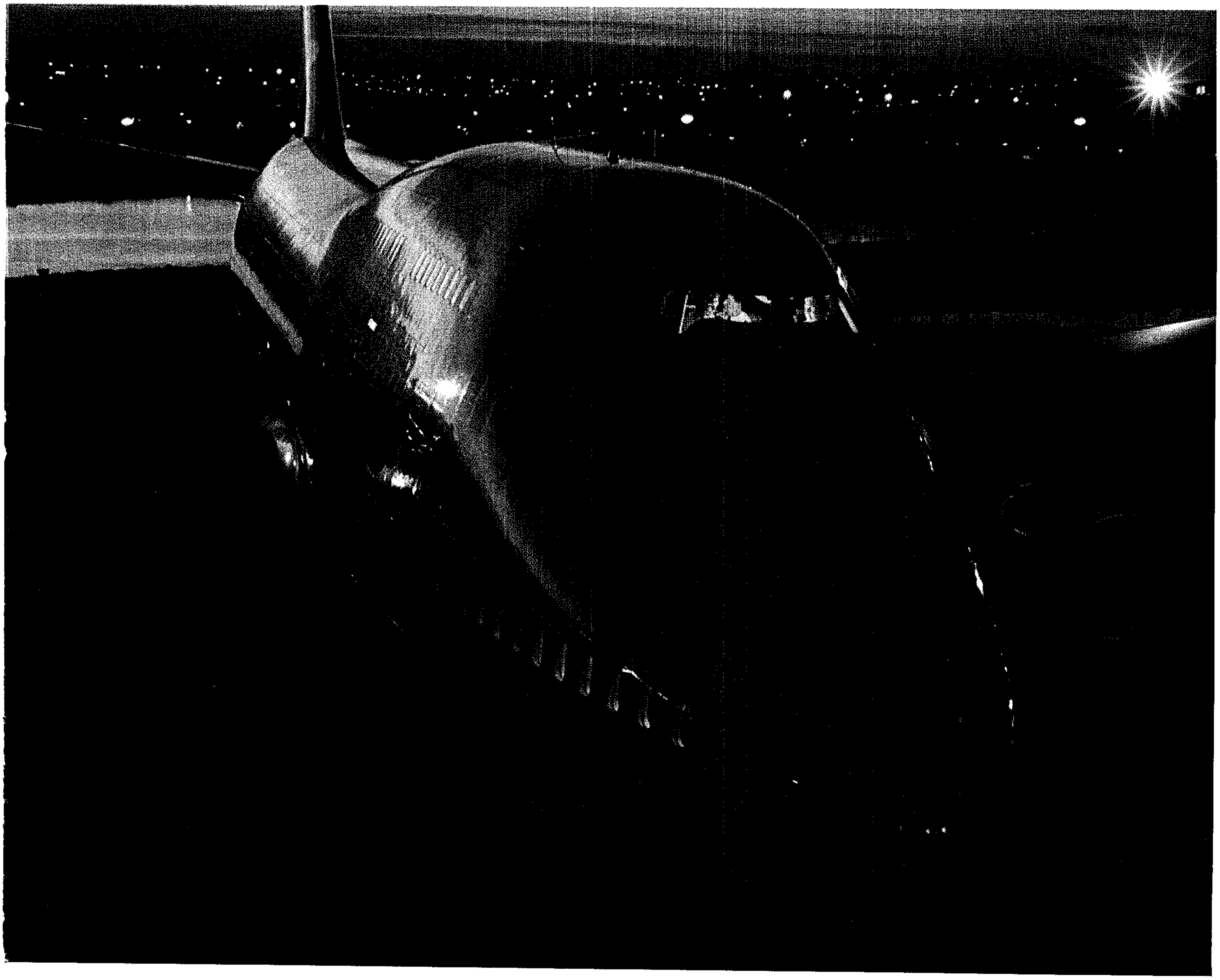

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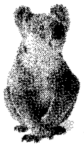

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MUSIC

MICHAEL TIPPETT is one of the least classifiable figures in twentieth-century music. He was a late starter and is proving a very late finisher: born in 1905, he did not begin producing consequential works until around his thirtieth year, but he has kept on producing them into his mid-eighties. It is hard to think of another composer in any era who has brought out a full-length opera at age eighty-four, as Tippett did last year in Houston. (Verdi was a mere eighty when he presented "Falstaff.") He was an early exponent of the eclectic intermingling of American vernacular and European art-music traditions. He has been preoccupied with pacifism and socialism and with the Jungian idea of the need for the psyche to confront and know its "shadow" element. Sometimes his works come across as appallingly amateurish pastiche and sometimes they go right to the heart of the matter. Styles, movements, and trends have swirled around him without nudging him appreciably from his personal course.

All these strains are identifiable in his first big public success, the oratorio "A Child of Our Time." It was composed shortly after the outbreak of the Second World War and first performed in 1944. The text, Tippett's own, treats (in allusive generality and specific reference) Herschel Grynsban, the Jewish teenager who killed a German diplomat in Paris in 1938 and provided the Nazis with a propaganda pretext for the most intense persecutions they had undertaken up to that point. The work is accepted as a landmark in Britain, but it is not often done here; the New York Choral Society will perform it under John Daly Goodwin on February 1 at Carnegie Hall, with Lucy Shelton among the soloists.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; for the Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St., 874-7515; for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719; and for the 92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St., 415-5440. Other box-office numbers are included in the listings.)

OPERA

METROPOLITAN OPERA—**LA TRAVIATA**, with Marilyn Mims, Alfredo Kraus, Paolo Coni, and James Courtney; conducted by Michelangelo Veltri. (Jan. 29; Feb. 2, when Karen Huffstadt will sing the role of Violetta; and Feb. 7, with Edita Gruberova, all at 8.) . . . **LA GIOCONDA**, with Ghena Dimitrova, Stefania Toczyska, Bruno Beccaria, and Alain Fondary; Nello Santi. (Jan. 30 at 8 and Feb. 3 at 1:30.) . . . **COSÌ FAN TUTTE**, with Marilyn Mims, Tatiana Troyanos, Hei-Kyung Hong, Jerry Hadley, and Thomas Hampson; Richard Woitach. (Jan. 31 at 8.) . . . With Carol Vaness, Diane Kesling, Hei-Kyung Hong, Jerry Hadley, and Thomas Hampson; Richard Woitach. (Feb. 3 at 8.) . . . **FAUST**, a new production, with Carol Vaness, Neil Shicoff, Brian Schexnayder, and James Morris; Charles Dutoit. (Feb. 1 at 7 and Feb. 6 at 8.) . . . **IL TROVATORE**, with Susan Dunn, Dolora Zajick, Ermanno Mauro, and Lajos Miller; Rico Saccani. (Feb. 5 at 8.)

CENTER FOR CONTEMPORARY OPERA—Presenting "Dream Play," a new opera by Timothy Sullivan. (Marymount Manhattan Theatre, 221 E. 71st St. Feb. 6 at 8. For information about tickets, call 279-4200.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

NEW YORK PHILHARMONIC—At Avery Fisher Hall, Erich Leinsdorf conducting. Jan. 30 at 7:30: Works by Liszt, Stravinsky, Poulenc, and Offenbach. . . . ¶ Feb. 1-2 at 8 and Feb. 6 at 7:30: Works by Strauss-Couperin, Haydn, and Mozart. With Philip Myers, horn.

WARSAW PHILHARMONIC—Kazimierz Kord conducting works by Szymanowski, Beethoven, and Shostakovich. With Zoltan Kocsis, piano. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 2 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHAMBER SYMPHONY—Jaime Laredo conducting an all-Vivaldi program. With Syoko Aki and Mr. Laredo, violin; André Emelianoff, cello; Judith Mendenhall and Claudia Walker, flute; Randall Ellis and Mark Hill, oboe; and David Singer and Laura Flax, clarinet. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 3 at 8.)

NATIONAL ARTS CENTRE ORCHESTRA OF CANADA—Gabriel Chmura conducting a program that will include the New York première of Michael Colgrass's "The Schubert Birds." (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 4 at 3.)

CHAMBER ORCHESTRA OF CANNES—Philippe Bender conducting. With Ransom Wilson, flute. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Feb. 5 at 8.)

ORCHESTRA OF ST. LUKE'S—John Eliot Gardiner conducting works by Stravinsky, Ibert, Percy Grainger, and Bartók. With Elizabeth Mann, flute. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 6 at 8.)

NEW YORK CHORAL SOCIETY—John Daly Goodwin conducting Michael Tippett's "A Child of Our Time." With Lucy Shelton, soprano, and Rebecca Russell, mezzo-soprano. (Carnegie Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

RECITALS

"WORLD OF ARNOLD SCHOENBERG"—The last five concerts by the Juilliard School of a six-evening festival devoted to music by the composer, by those who influenced him, and by those he influenced. (Jan. 29-Feb. 1 at the Juilliard Theatre; Feb. 2 at Alice Tully Hall. Evenings at 8. For tickets, which are free, call 874-7515.)

DOWNTOWN CHAMBER PLAYERS—Mimi Stern-Wolfe conducting and playing the piano in a program of works by Erwin Schulhoff and Kurt Weill. (Merkin Concert Hall. Jan. 31 at 8.)

TOKYO STRING QUARTET—In an all-Beethoven program. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. Jan. 31 at 8.)

BREMNER QUARTET—In a program of baroque chamber music. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. Feb. 1 at 8.)

ANGELA CHENG—Piano. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 1 at 8.)

NEW YORK PHILOMUSICA—Playing chamber music by Poulenc, Villa-Lobos, and Brahms. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 1 at 8.)

CLASSICAL QUARTET—In an all-Haydn program. With guest artists Christopher Krueger, flute, and Steven Lubin, fortepiano. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. Feb. 2 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

FINE ARTS QUARTET—With David Shifrin, clarinet. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. Feb. 2 at 8.)

HARMONIE ENSEMBLE—Steven Richman conducting. With Ralph Votapek, piano, and James Kreger, cello. (Florence Gould Hall, French Institute–Alliance Française, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. Feb. 2 at 8.)

PHILIP GLASS ENSEMBLE—Performing "Music in 12 Parts." The work, which is four hours long, will be presented with two short intermissions and an hour-long dinner break. (Avery Fisher Hall. Feb. 3 at 6.)

ASPEN WIND QUINTET—Playing, among other compositions, premières of works by George Tsontakis and Frank Zappa. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 4 at 3.)

ENSEMBLE FOR EARLY MUSIC—Presenting a staged production of "Daniel and the Lions," based on a twelfth-century cathedral play. (Cloisters, Fort Tryon Park. 923-3700. Feb. 4 at 1:30 and 3:30.)

LUCINE AMARA—Soprano. (Broadway Presbyterian Church, Broadway at 114th St. Feb. 4 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

SI YO MUSIC SOCIETY—Playing chamber music by Willem De Fesch, Franz Danzi, and Brahms. (Pace Downtown Theatre, Spruce St. between Nassau and Gold Sts. 488-1715. Feb. 4 at 3.)

CHAMBER MUSIC SOCIETY OF LINCOLN CENTER—Playing works by Albinoni, Purcell, Mozart, and others. With guest artists Carmit Zori, violin; Judith Pearce, flute; Peggy Pearson and Stephen Taylor, oboe; and Robert Wolinsky, harpsichord, among others. Also with artists of the society. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 4 at 5 and Feb. 6 at 7:30.)

Beethoven Society—Presenting an evening of the composer's violin music. With violinists Joseph Fuchs, Robert Portney, Gregory Fulkerson, Masuko Ushioda, Daniel Phillips, and Oleg Krysa. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 4 at 3.)

John Cobb—Piano, playing works by Muzio Clementi, Beethoven, and Liszt. (Merkin Concert Hall. Feb. 4 at 7.)

VineyardMusicke—Performing French baroque chamber music and dances. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. Feb. 6 at 8.)

S.E.M. Ensemble—In an evening of music and poetry. With guest performances by John Cage, Dick Higgins, Jackson Mac Low, and Anne Tardos. (Paula Cooper Gallery, 155 Wooster St. Feb. 6 at 8. For information about tickets, call 674-0766.)

Richard Goode and Dawn Upshaw—Piano and soprano, in a program of works by Purcell, Samuel Barber, and others. (92nd Street Y. Feb. 7 at 8.)

Guarneri Quartet—Performing works by Beethoven, Debussy, and Brahms. (Alice Tully Hall. Feb. 7 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

B. B. King, John Mayall, and Koko Taylor—B. B. (Blues Boy, an early stage name) King has been crafting a stately and joyful body of Mississippi-Memphis blues work for nearly five decades, and his recent collaboration and tour with U2 and the current blues revival have won him a large and well-deserved new audience. Mayall, whose blues cradle was Manchester, has always brought a supple and airy Englishness to the grit and weight of the blues, and he's a soulful journeyman. Koko Taylor completes the lineup. (Beacon Theatre, Broadway at 74th St. 496-7070. Feb. 2 at 8 and midnight.)

Lou Rawls, the Les Mc Cann Trio, and Marlena Shaw—Although he's long been a smooth Vegas-style entertainer in a tuxedo, Lou Rawls can still wrap his raspy, thick, down-home voice around a soul song, and his long, mesmerizing spoken introductions can still vividly evoke the struggles and lessons of the bad old days. Les McCann brings his own gruff voice and his jazz-piano verve to bear on a reliably rousing R. & B. set that can heat the audience up to a boil. With singer Marlena Shaw. (Apollo Theatre, 253 W. 125th St. 864-0372. Feb. 2-3 at 8 and midnight.)

B-52's—Bang, bang, bang on the door, baby, because inside, in the midst of a huge critical and commercial comeback, the B-52's, the world's greatest dance band, will be turning Radio City Music Hall into a frugging, shimmying world party. While master of ceremonies Fred Schneider sings songs that hold the humid, Old South promise of lazy days and dance-filled nights, party girls Cindy Wilson and Kate Pierson scream and twist away with all the sexy, giddy abandon of dancers at a high-school sock hop. It's all wonderful fun, and when Pierson and Wilson take the lead, singing and playing a-go-go, the concert soars and becomes an irresistible communal event. Audience participation, dancing this mess around, is a must. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. Feb. 6-8 at 8.)

Tom Petty and the Heartbreakers—With Lenny Kravitz. (Nassau Coliseum. 1-516 422-9222. Jan. 31 at 8.)

"Highlights in Jazz"—Presenting Clark Terry, Buddy Tate, Al Grey, and Junior Mance. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. and LaGuardia Pl. 998-4949. Feb. 1 at 8.)

The The—Beacon Theatre. Feb. 1 at 8.

Take 6—With New York Voices. (Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. Feb. 3 at 8.)

"Vintage Jazz at the Vineyard"—Bobby Scott, Feb. 4 at 3. . . . ¶ Grady Tate, Feb. 4 at 7. (108 E. 15th St. 353-3874.)

The Kitchen—Jan. 31: Worlds of Love (Cinnie Cole, David Garland, and Ikue Mori) and Karen Black. . . . ¶ Feb. 1: Fish and Roses, the Sirens, and Blue Blue Blue. . . . ¶ Feb. 2: Gods and Monsters, Gary Lucas, and Julia Heyward. . . . ¶ Feb. 3: Maximalist! (512 W. 19th St. 255-5793. Evenings at 8:30.)

SPORTS

Rangers—Vs. the St. Louis Blues, Jan. 31. . . . ¶ Vs. the Minnesota North Stars, Feb. 4. . . . ¶ Vs. the Edmonton Oilers, Feb. 7. (Game time, 7:30.)

Islanders—Vs. the St. Louis Blues, Jan. 30. . . . ¶ Vs. the Washington Capitals, Feb. 2. (Game time, 7:35.)

Devils—Vs. the Edmonton Oilers, Feb. 6 at 7:45.

Knicks—Vs. the Sacramento Kings, Feb. 1. . . . ¶ Vs. the Indiana Pacers, Feb. 3. . . . ¶ Vs. the Miami Heat, Feb. 5. (Game time, 7:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Utah Jazz, Feb. 7 at 7:30.

Indoor Track—The Millrose games start at 7 on Feb. 2. Runners will include Roger Kingdom, Marcus O'Sullivan, and Sandra Patrick-Farmer. (Madison Square Garden.)

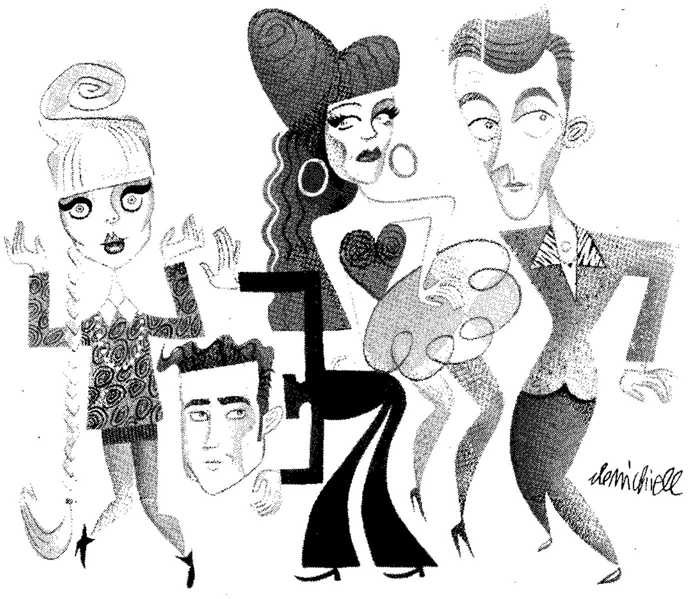
(The Devils and the Nets play at the Meadowlands, 1-201 935-3900; the Rangers and the Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 563-8300; and the Islanders play at the Nassau Coliseum, 1-516 422-9222.)

ABOVE AND BEYOND

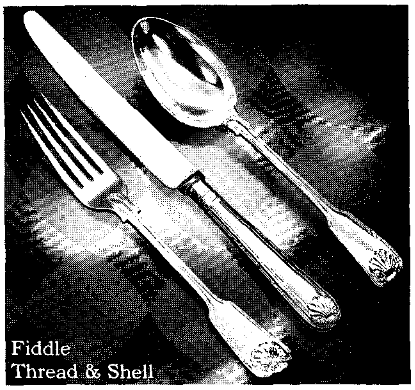
Interplanetary Travel—There's a new sky show at the Hayden Planetarium. This one reveals to stargazers the blue storms around Neptune, the clouds near Jupiter, the surface of Venus, and the nucleus of a comet. (81st St. and Central Park W. For show times, call 769-5920.)

Irving Berlin—A tribute to the songwriter, who died last year at a hundred and one. Presented by ASCAP, and with performances and reminiscences by Tony Bennett, Rosemary Clooney, Helen Hayes, Mandy Patinkin, Jerome Robbins, and others. (Music Box Theatre, 239 W. 45th St. Feb. 6 at noon. A limited number of free tickets will be available at the theatre at 9 on the day of the memorial.)

Readings—Galway Kinnell reading from his own work. (Tisch Hall, New York University, 40 W. 4th St. Jan. 31 at 8. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ Robert Hughes, Elizabeth Hardwick, Susan Sontag, and others reading from the work of Bruce Chatwin. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 645-5848. Feb. 5 at 8.)



Cindy Wilson, Keith Strickland, Kate Pierson, and Fred Schneider of the B-52's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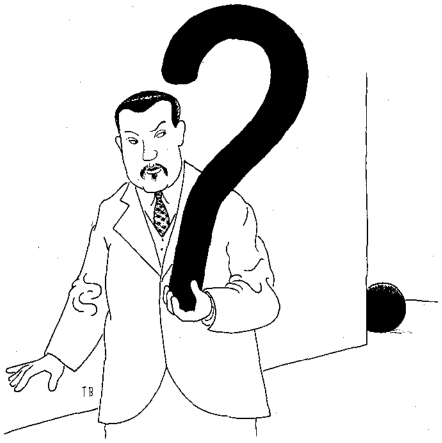

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Theatre 1: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Jan. 31: "Valmont" (directed by Miloš Forman), with Colin Firth, Annette Bening, and Meg Tilly. From Feb. 1: "Black Rain" (Shohei Imamura; in Japanese).

Theatre 3: "The Fabulous Baker Boys" (†).

Theatre 4: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Theatre 5: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Theatre 6: "Drugstore Cowboy" (†).

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)

"L'État Sauvage" (1978, Francis Girod; in French).

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)

Theatre 1: "Roger & Me" (†).

Theatre 2: "Music Box" (†).

Theatre 3: "Glory" (†).

Second Avenue Theatre, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (673-4046)

"Internal Affairs" (†).

Bijou Cinema, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

Through Feb. 1: "The War of the Roses" (†).

From Feb. 2: "Internal Affairs" (†).

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)

Theatre 1: "True Love" (Nancy Savoca), with Annabella Sciorra and Ron Eldard.

Theatre 2: "Roger & Me" (†).

Theatre 3: "Music Box" (†).

Theatre 4: Through Feb. 1: "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger. From Feb. 2: "Heart Condition" (James D. Parriott), with Bob Hoskins, Denzel Washington, and Chloe Webb.

Theatre 5: "Glory" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Feb. 1: "Internal Affairs" (†). From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)

Through Feb. 1: "Blaze" (†).

From Feb. 2: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)

"Strike It Rich" (James Scott), with Robert Lindsay, Molly Ringwald, and John Gielgud.

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)

Theatre 1: "Raging Bull" (1980, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci.

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger. From Feb. 2: "Heart Condition" (James D. Parriott), with Bob Hoskins, Denzel Washington, and Chloe Webb.

Theatre 3: Through Feb. 1: "Internal Affairs" (†). From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)

"The War of the Roses" (†).

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)

"Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

Sutton, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)

Through Feb. 1: "Tango & Cash" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell.

From Feb. 2: "Men Don't Leave" (Paul Brickman), with Jessica Lange.

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)

"Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)

"Music Box" (†).

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)

Theatre 1: "Tremors" (Ron Underwood), with Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward.

Theatre 2: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)

"Always" (†).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)

Theatre 1: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Theatre 2: "The War of the Roses" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)

Theatre 1: Through Feb. 1: "Roger & Me" (†). From Feb. 2: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "Blaze" (†). From Feb. 2: "Mack the Knife" (Menahem Golan), with Raul Julia.

Theatre 3: "sex, lies, and videotape" (†).

Gemini 1 and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)

Theatre 1: "Steel Magnolias" (Herbert Ross), with Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Julia Roberts, and Shirley MacLaine.

Theatre 2: "Glory" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)

"Strike It Rich" (James Scott), with Robert Lindsay and Molly Ringwald.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)

Theatre 1: Through Feb. 1: "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger. From Feb. 2: "Heart Condition" (James D. Parriott), with Bob Hoskins, Denzel Washington, and Chloe Webb.

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "Internal Affairs" (†). From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)

"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)

"Crimes and Misdemeanors" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)

"Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)

Theatre 1: Through Feb. 1: "Tremors" (Ron Underwood), with Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward. From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

Theatre 2: "The War of the Roses" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)

Theatre 1: "Tango and Cash" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell.

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "The Little Mermaid" (†). From Feb. 2: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.

WEST SIDE

Bleecker Street Cinema 1 and 2, 144 Bleecker St. (674-2560)

Theatre 1: "Labyrinth of Passion" (1982, directed by Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish).

Theatre 2: "A Flame in My Heart" (Alain Tanner; in French).

Waverly 1 and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)

Theatre 1: "The War of the Roses" (†).

Theatre 2: "Strike It Rich" (James Scott), with Robert Lindsay and Molly Ringwald.

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)

"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)

Theatre 1: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "Always" (†). From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)

Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "The Little Mermaid" (†); and (evenings only) "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger.

Theatre 2: "Crimes and Misdemeanors" (†).

Theatre 3: "Henry V" (†).

Theatre 4: "War Requiem" (Derek Jarman).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)

Theatre 1: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Theatre 2: "Steel Magnolias" (Herbert Ross), with Sally Field, Dolly Parton, Julia Roberts, and Shirley MacLaine.

Theatre 3: "Always" (†).

Theatre 4: "The War of the Roses" (†).

Theatre 5: "Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Theatre 6: "Tango and Cash" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell.

Theatre 7: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Theatre 8: "Back to the Future Part II" (†).

Theatre 9: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)

Theatre 1: "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta, Kirstie Alley, Olympia Dukakis, and George Segal.

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "The Little Mermaid" (†); and (evenings only) "Leatherface: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3" (Jeff Burr).

Theatre 3: "Tremors" (Ron Underwood), with Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)

Theatre 1: "Drugstore Cowboy" (†).

Theatre 2: "Strike It Rich" (James Scott), with Robert Lindsay and Molly Ringwald.

Theatre 3: "Do the Right Thing" (†).

Theatre 4: "Ski Patrol" (Richard Correll).

Theatre 5: "True Love" (Nancy Savoca), with Annabella Sciorra and Ron Eldard.

Theatre 6: "Field of Dreams" (Phil Alden Robinson), with Kevin Costner.

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)

Through Feb. 1: "The Little Mermaid" (†).

From Feb. 2: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)

"Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)

"Henry V" (†).

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)

"Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinema, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)

"Enemies, A Love Story" (†).

Carnegie Screening Room, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (757-2131)

"Crimes and Misdemeanors" (†).

Paris, 4 W. 58th. (688-2013)

"Camille Claudel" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)

"Triumph of the Spirit" (Robert M. Young), with Willem Dafoe.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)

"Music Box" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)

"The War of the Roses" (†).

Lincoln Plaza 1, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)

Theatre 1: "My Left Foot" (†).

Theatre 2: "Sweetie" (Jane Campion).

Theatre 3: Through Feb. 1: "Story of Women" (Claude Chabrol; in French), with Isabelle Huppert. From Feb. 2: "Cinema Paradiso" (Giuseppe Tornatore; in Italian), with Philippe Noiret.

Cinema Studio 1 and 2, B'way at 66th. (877-4040)

Theatre 1: "Mystery Train" (Jim Jarmusch).

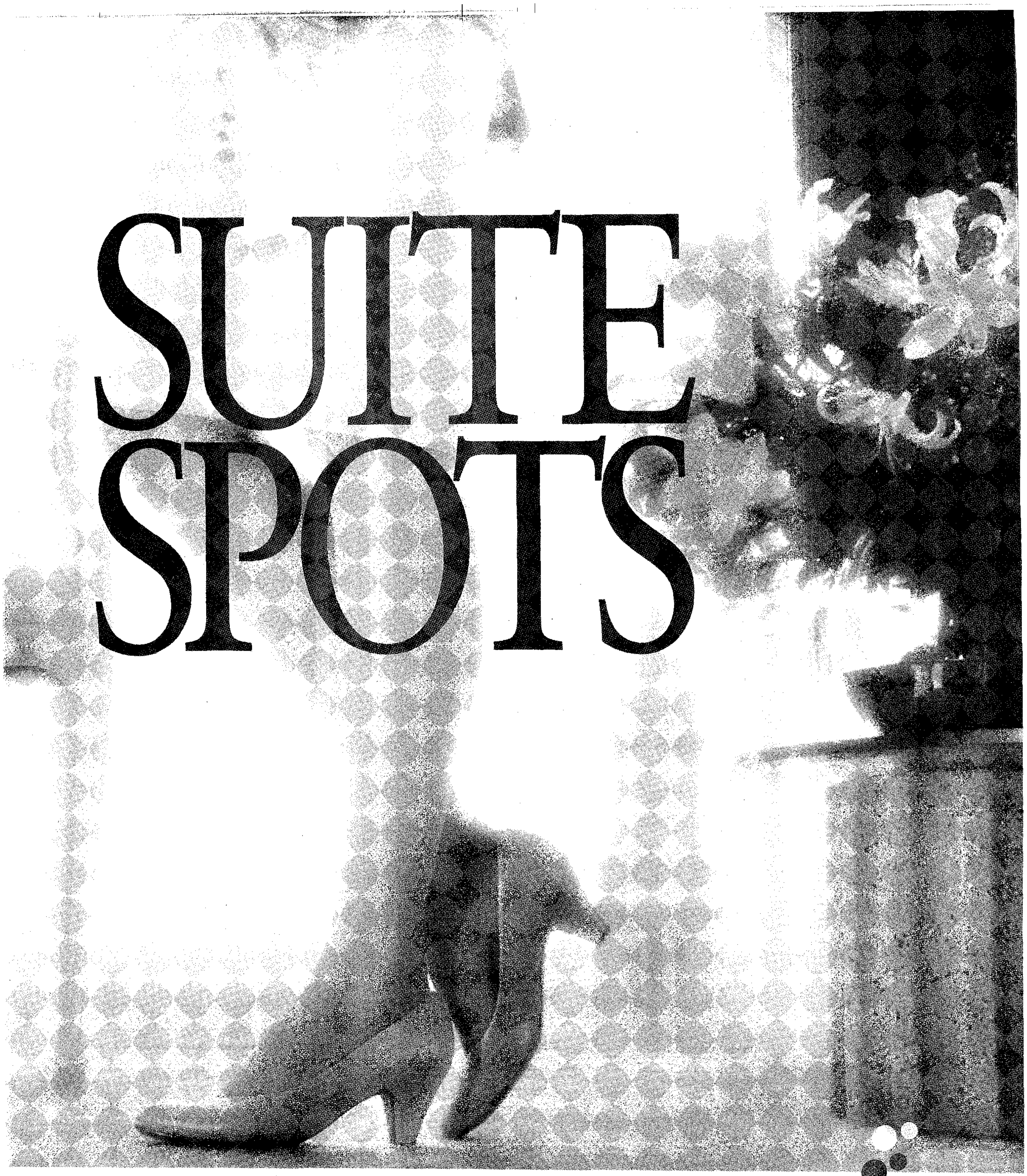
Theatre 2: "The Plot Against Harry" (Michael Roemer).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)

"Always" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)

Theatre 1: Through Feb. 1: "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger. From Feb. 2: "Stella" (John Erman), with Bette Midler and John Goodman.



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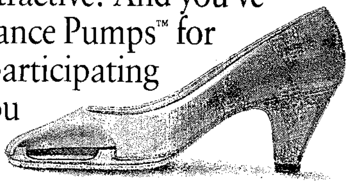

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MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "Internal Affairs" (†). From Feb. 2: "Heart Condition" (James D. Parriott), with Bob Hoskins, Denzel Washington, and Chloe Webb.

Theatre 3: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

Theatre 4: "Roger & Me" (†).

Theatre 5: "Glory" (†).

Theatre 6: Through Feb. 1: "Strike It Rich" (James Scott), with Robert Lindsay and Molly Ringwald. From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

Metro Cinema 1 and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)

Theatre 1: "Born on the 4th of July" (†).

Theatre 2: (Matinées only) "The Little Mermaid" (†); and (evenings only) "Steel Magnolias" (Herbert Ross), with Sally Field, Dolly Parton, and Julia Roberts.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)

Theatre 1: "Tremors" (Ron Underwood), with Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward.

Theatre 2: "Tango and Cash" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell.

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)

Theatre 1: "Glory" (†).

Theatre 2: "The War of the Roses" (†).

Theatre 3: Through Feb. 1: "Leatherface: The Texas Chainsaw Massacre 3" (directed by Jeff Burr). From Feb. 2: "Crack House."

Theatre 4: "Look Who's Talking" (Amy Heckerling), with John Travolta and Kirstie Alley.

Theatre 5: "Tango and Cash" (Andrei Konchalovsky), with Sylvester Stallone and Kurt Russell.

Theatre 6: "The War of the Roses" (†).

Embassy 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

Through Feb. 1: "Everybody Wins" (Karel Reisz), with Nick Nolte and Debra Winger.

From Feb. 2: "Flashback" (Franco Amurri), with Dennis Hopper and Kiefer Sutherland.

Embassy 2, 3, and 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 2: Through Feb. 1: "We're No Angels" (Neil Jordan), with Robert De Niro and Sean Penn. From Feb. 2: "Internal Affairs" (†).

Theatre 3: "Harlem Nights" (Eddie Murphy), with Murphy and Richard Pryor.

Theatre 4: "Blaze" (†).

Loews Astor Plaza, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

Through Feb. 1: "Internal Affairs" (†).

From Feb. 2: "Heart Condition" (James D. Parriott), with Bob Hoskins, Denzel Washington, and Chloe Webb.

National Twin, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Downtown" (Richard Benjamin), with Forest Whitaker and Anthony Edwards.

Theatre 2: "Tremors" (Ron Underwood), with Kevin Bacon and Fred Ward.

Warner, 7th Ave. between 42nd and 43rd. (764-6760)

"Back to the Future Part II" (†).

West Side Cinema 1 and 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: (Matinées only) "The Little Mermaid" (†); and (evenings only) "Steel Magnolias" (Herbert Ross), with Sally Field, Dolly Parton, and Julia Roberts.

Theatre 2: "Driving Miss Daisy" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

Biograph Cinema, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

Through Jan. 30: "Jean de Florette" (1985, directed by Claude Berri; in French), with Yves Montand, Gérard Depardieu, Elisabeth Depardieu, and Daniel Auteuil; and "The Woman Next Door" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Depardieu and Fanny Ardant.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Loulou" (1980, Maurice Pialat; in French), with Isabelle Huppert, Gérard Depardieu, and Guy Marchand; and "Police" (1986, Pialat; in French), with Depardieu.

Feb. 2-3: "La Chèvre" (1981, Francis Véber; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Pierre Richard; and "Mon Oncle d'Amérique" (1980, Alain Resnais; in French), with Depardieu, Nicole Garcia, and Roger-Pierre.

Feb. 4-5: "The Fugitive Kind" (1960, Sidney Lumet), with Marlon Brando, Anna Magnani, and Joanne Woodward; and "The Chase" (1966, Arthur Penn), with Brando, Jane Fonda, Robert Redford, and E. G. Marshall.

Feb. 6-7: "One-Eyed Jacks" (1961, Marlon Brando), with Brando, Karl Malden, and Katy Jurado; and "The Missouri Breaks" (1976, Arthur Penn), with Brando and Jack Nicholson.

Cinema Village, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)

Through Jan. 30: "Bells Are Ringing" (1960, Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Holliday and Dean Martin; and "The Solid Gold Cadillac" (1956, Richard Quine), with Holliday, Paul Douglas, and Fred Clark.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Repo Man" (1984, Alex Cox), with Emilio Estevez and Harry Dean Stanton; and "Wizard of Speed and Time" (1988, Mike Jittlov).

Feb. 2-3: "Salaam Bombay!" (1988, Mira Nair; in Hindi); and "Spices" (1989, Ketan Mehta; in Hindi), with Smita Patil.

Feb. 4: "Seven Beauties" (1976, Lina Wertmüller; in Italian), with Giancarlo Giannini; and "Swept Away" (†).

Feb. 5-6: "A Cry in the Dark" (1988, Fred Schepisi), with Meryl Streep and Sam Neill; and "Anatomy of a Murder" (1959, Otto Preminger), with James Stewart.

From Feb. 7: "The Last Detail" (1974, Hal Ashby), with Jack Nicholson, Otis Young, and Randy Quaid; and "One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest" (1975, Miloš Forman), with Nicholson.

Thalia SoHo, 15 Vandam St. (675-0498)

Through Jan. 30: "Five Easy Pieces" (1970, Bob Rafelson), with Jack Nicholson; and "The Postman Always Rings Twice" (1981, Rafelson), with Nicholson, Jessica Lange, and John Colicos.

Jan. 31-Feb. 1: "Hannah and Her Sisters" (1986, Woody Allen), with Mia Farrow, Barbara Hershey, and Dianne Wiest; "Broadway Danny Rose" (1984, Allen), with Allen, Farrow, and Nick Apollo Forte; and "The Purple Rose of Cairo" (1985, Allen), with Farrow and Jeff Daniels.

Feb. 2-3: "Salvador" (1986, Oliver Stone), with James Woods, John Savage, Elpidia Carrillo, and Jim Belushi; and "Romero" (1989, John Duigan), with Raul Julia.

Feb. 4: "The Memory of Justice" (†).

Feb. 5-6: "Priest Love" (1981, Christopher Miles), with Ian McKellen and Janet Suzman; and "Lady Chatterley's Lover" (1982, Just Jaeckin), with Sylvia Kristel.

From Feb. 7: "Open City" (1945, Roberto Rossellini; in Italian), with Anna Magnani; and "L'Amore" (1948, Rossellini; in Italian), with Magnani.

Theatre 80 St. Marks, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

Jan. 29: "Circle of Deceit" (1982, Volker Schlöndorff; in German), with Bruno Ganz and Hanna Schygulla; and "The Tin Drum" (1980, Schlöndorff; in German).

Jan. 30: "Hold Your Man" (1933, Sam Wood), with Jean Harlow and Clark Gable; and "Riffraff" (1935, J. Walter Ruben), with Harlow and Spencer Tracy.

Jan. 31: "How the West Was Won" (1963, John Ford, Henry Hathaway, and George Marshall).

Feb. 1: "Taris" (1931, Jean Vigo; in French), a short film; "À Propos de Nice" (1930, Vigo; in French), a short film; "Zero for Conduct" (†); and "L'Atalante" (†).

Feb. 2-3: "Stage Fright" (1950, Alfred Hitchcock), with Jane Wyman, Marlene Dietrich, Richard Todd, and Michael Wilding; and "Strangers on a Train" (1951, Hitchcock), with Farley Granger, Robert Walker, and Ruth Roman.

Feb. 4: "Band of Outsiders" (†); and "Breathless" (1959, Jean-Luc Godard; in French), with Jean Seberg and Jean-Paul Belmondo.

Feb. 5: "Carnival in Flanders" (1936, Jacques Feyder; in French), with Louis Jouvet; and "Toni" (1935, Jean Renoir; in French).

Feb. 6: "The Chinese Cat" (1944, Phil Rosen) and "The Meeting at Midnight" (1944, Rosen), both with Sidney Toler as Charlie Chan.

Feb. 7: "Ninotchka" (1939, Ernst Lubitsch), with Greta Garbo and Melvyn Douglas; and "Grand Hotel" (1932, Edmund Goulding), with Garbo, John Barrymore, Joan Crawford, and Wallace Beery.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

Museum of Modern Art, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)

THEATRE 1: Jan. 30 at 6:30: "Cabiria" (1914, directed by Giovanni Pastrone; a silent film). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 3 and 6: A program of Film and Photo League films. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 2:30: "A Man of Principle" (1984, Francisco Norden; a Colombian film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 6 and Feb. 3 at 2: "The Accordionist's Wedding" (1986, Luis Fernando Bottía; a Colombian film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 5: "Reborn" (1987, Marta Rodríguez), a documentary from Colombia; and "Love, Women, and Flowers" (1989, Rodríguez and Jorge Silva), a documentary from Colombia. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 2: "The Ambassador from India" (1986, Mario Ribero; a Colombian film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 5: "A Man of Principle." . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 2:30: "Reborn" and "Love, Women, and Flowers." . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 6 and Feb. 6 at 2:30: "No Future—Rodrigo D." (1989, Victor Gaviria; a Colombian film, in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 6: "The Ambassador from India."

THEATRE 2: Jan. 30 at 3: "The Little Organ" (1934, Nikolai Khodatayev; in Russian); and "A Familiar Face" (1929, Nikolai Skoikovsky; a Russian silent film). . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 6: "Goodbye, Boys" (1966, Mikhail Kalik; in Russian). . . . ¶ Feb. 5 at 6:30: Films by Phil Solomon, who will be present.

Museum of Broadcasting, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"MB Playhouse," *a chance to see the* television dramas you may have missed in the past thirty or so years. Jan. 30-Feb. 3: F. Scott Fitzgerald's "Bernice Bobs Her Hair" (1977, Joan Micklin Silver; PBS), with Shelley Duvall, Bud Cort, and Polly Holliday; and James Thurber's "The Greatest Man in the World" (1980, Ralph Rosenblum; PBS), with Brad Davis, Carol Kane, and Howard Da Silva. . . . From Feb. 6: Ernest Hemingway's "Soldier's Home" (1977, Robert Young; PBS), with Richard Backus and Nancy Marchand; and Richard Wright's "Almos' a Man" (1977, Stan Lathan; PBS), with LeVar Burton and Madge Sinclair. Showings Tuesdays at 3 and 6 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 3. . . . ¶ "Twenty Years of Monty Python." From Jan. 30: An episode of "Fawlty Towers," with John Cleese; and a 1987 episode of "Cheers," with Cleese. Showings Tuesdays at 12:15 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 12:15. . . . ¶ "The New York World Television Festival." From Jan. 30: Award-winning international documentary and entertainment programs. The schedule of performances is complicated; our best advice is to phone the museum for titles, schedules, and ticket information. Closed Sundays and Mondays.

American Museum of the Moving Image, 35th Ave. at 36th St., Astoria. (1-718 784-0077)—In the Riklis Theatre. Films directed by John Ford. Jan. 31 at 2:30: "The Long Grey Line" (1955), with Tyrone Power, Maureen O'Hara, and Robert Francis. . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 2:30: "Salute" (1929), with George O'Brien. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 2:30: "7 Women" (1965), with Anne Bancroft, Sue Lyon, Margaret Leighton, and Flora Robson. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 1: "Doctor Bull" (1933), with Will Rogers. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 2:30: "Judge Priest" (1934), with Rogers and Stepin Fetchit. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 4: "Steamboat Round the Bend" (1935), with Rogers and Anne Shirley. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at noon: "Rookie of the Year" (1955, a television film), with Pat Wayne, Vera Miles, Ward Bond, and John Wayne; and "Flashing Spikes" (1962, a television film), with James Stewart, Jack Warden, and Pat Wayne. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 2: "The Prisoner of Shark Island" (1936), with Warner Baxter. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 4: "The Fugitive" (1947), with Henry Fonda.

Anthology Film Archives, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—Films showing in either the Jonas Mekas Theatre or the Maya Deren Theatre. Jan. 31 at 7: "Bilbao, A Story of Love" (1978, José Juan Bigas Luna; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 9: "The Death of Mikel" (1984, Imanol Uribe; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 7: "Pepi, Luci, Bom and Other Girls on the Heap" (1980, Pedro Almodóvar; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 7: "Christmas 85" (1985, George Kuchar). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 9: "Gary Cooper Who Art in Heaven" (1980, Pilar Miró; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 9: "Video Album 3" (1985) and "Greetings from Boulder" (1986), both by Kuchar. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 7: "Black Brood" (1977, Manuel Gutiérrez Aragón; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 7: "Forevermore: Biography of a Leach Lord" (1990, Eric Saks). Mr. Saks will be present. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 9: "My Nanny" (1987, José Luis Borau; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 9: Seven short films by Leslie Thornton. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 5: "Race" (1941, José Saenz de Heredia; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 7: "Life in Shadows" (1948, Lorenz Llobet Gracia; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb.

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MOVIE HOUSES—Cont'd

3 at 7: A film by Thornton. . . . ¶ Feb. 3-4 at 9: "Old Memory" (1977, Jaime Camino; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 9: Five films by Thornton. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 5: "Furrows" (1951, José Antonio Nieves Conde; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 7: "Death of a Cyclist" (1955, Juan Antonio Bardem; in Spanish). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 9: "Video Album 4" (1986) and "Jane's Visit" (1986), both by Kuchar.

Whitney Museum, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—Jan. 30 at 1:30: "I Do Not Know What It Is I Am Like" (1986, Bill Viola). . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 3:30: "Testing the Limits" (1987) and four other short films. . . . ¶ Jan. 30 at 6: "Seize Control of the FDA" (1988, Gregg Bordowitz and Jean Carlomusto) and two other short films. . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at noon: "Doctors, Liars, and Women" (1988, Jean Carlomusto and Maria Maggenti) and "Born to Be Sold: Martha Rosler Reads the Strange Case of Baby M" (1988, Martha Rosler and Paper Tiger Television). . . . ¶ Jan. 31 at 2:30: "Albert Pastor's First Video Project" (1988, Juan Garza and Daniel Villareal) and "The Man in the Mirror" (1989, Aimee Rankin). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at noon: "Everyone's Channel" (1989, David Shulman); and "Desperately Seeking Reality: Herb Schiller Reads Trash TV" (1989, Paper Tiger Southwest). . . . ¶ Feb. 1 at 2:30: "The Bombing of Osage Avenue" (1988, Louis Massiah). . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at noon: "MTV Artbreaks"; and an episode of "Andy Warhol's 15 Minutes." . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 2:30: An episode of "The Wonder Years." . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at noon: "Variety" (1983, Bette Gorden). . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 2:30: "Videodrome" (1983, David Cronenberg), with James Woods. . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at noon: "Committed" (1984, Sheila McLaughlin and Lynne Tillman). . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 3:30: "Zelig" (1983, Woody Allen), with Allen and Mia Farrow. . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 1:30: "Family Album" (1986, Alan Berliner) and "Damned If You Don't" (1987, Su Friedrich). . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 3:30: "Poltergeist" (1982, Tobe Hooper), with JoBeth Williams, Craig T. Nelson, and Beatrice Straight. . . . ¶ Feb. 6 at 6: "Peggy and Fred in Hell, the Prologue" (1985, Leslie Thornton) and three other short films. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at noon: "Lightening Over Braddock" (1988, Tony Buba). . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 2:30: "King of Comedy" (1982, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro and Jerry Lewis.

French Institute—Alliance Française, 22 E. 60th St. (355-6100)—Jan. 31 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Zou Zou" (1934, Marc Allégret; in French), with Josephine Baker, Jean Gabin, and Yvette Lebon. . . . ¶ Feb. 7 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Playtime" (1967, Jacques Tati; in English), with Tati.

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—Feb. 2 at 6:30: "Our Wonderful Years" (1966, Heinosuke Gosho; in Japanese); and "Rebellion of Japan" (1967, Gosho; in Japanese).

Adam Clayton Powell, Jr., State Office Building, 163 W. 125th St. (873-5040)—Feb. 2 at 1: "The Learning Tree" (1969, Gordon Parks), with Kyle Johnson, Estelle Evans, and Dick Ward; "Cornbread, Earl and Me" (1975, Joe Manduke), with Moses Gunn, Rosiland Cash, and Bernie Casey; and "Man and Boy" (1972, E. W. Swackhamer), with Bill Cosby, Gloria Foster, Douglas Turner Ward, Yaphet Kotto, and Henry Silva. . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 7: "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" (1971, Melvin Van Peebles), with Melvin Van Peebles, Mario Van Peebles, and John Amos; and "The River Niger" (1976, Kirishna Shah), with James Earl Jones, Lou Gossett, Jr., Cicely Tyson, and Glynn Turman. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 1 and 4:30: "She's Gotta Have It" (1986, Spike Lee), with Tracy Camilia John, Tommie Hicks, John Canada Terrell, and Lee; "Joe's Bed-Stuy Barbershop: We Cut Heads" (1983, Lee); and "Making 'Do the Right Thing' " (1989, St. Claire Bourne), a documentary. . . . ¶ Feb. 3 at 7:30: "The Spook Who Sat by the Door" (1973, Ivan Dixon), with Lawrence Cooke, Paula Kelly, and Janet League; and "The Final Comedown" (1972, Oscar Williams), with Billy Dee Williams.

Asia Society, 725 Park Ave., at 70th St. (517-2742)—"Romance, Gangsters and Chow Yun-Fat," a series of films starring Chow, a Hong Kong matinée idol. Feb. 2 at 6:30: "Love Unto Waste." . . . ¶ Feb. 2 at 8:30: "Love and Death in Saigon." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 5: "Dream Lovers." . . . ¶ Feb. 4 at 7: "Love in a Fallen City."

IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

(The following notes are by Pauline Kael and Terrence Rafferty.)

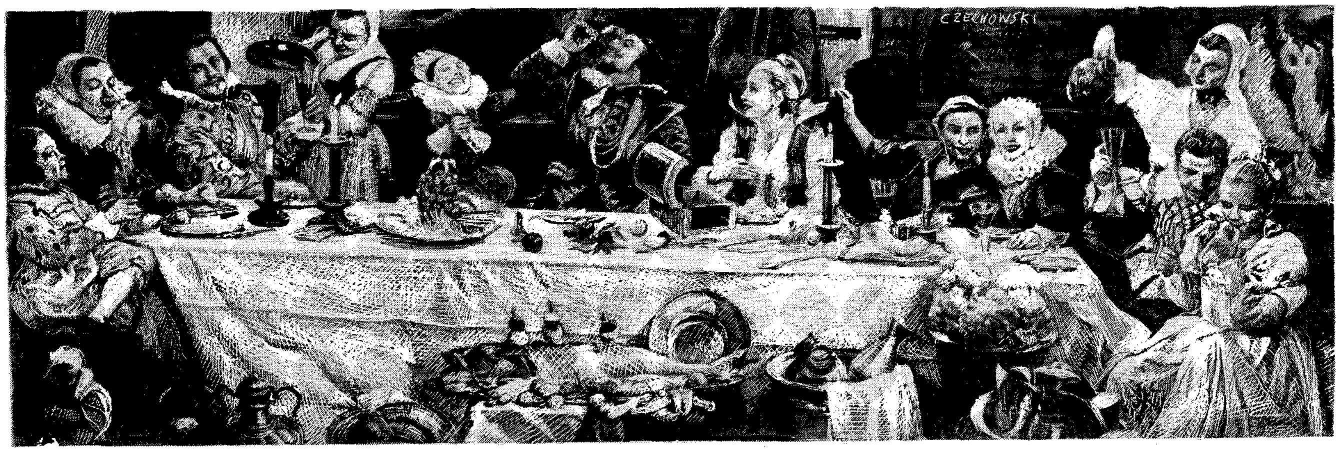
Always—"A Guy Named Joe" made Steven Spielberg cry when he was twelve; his remake can make you want to cry at the waste of his talent and your time. All he seems to want to do in each scene is get an audience reaction; almost everything is grandiloquent, rushed, confusing. And the whole idea has a voyeuristic queasiness. A miscast Richard Dreyfuss is the daredevil hero. The ace pilot of the wilderness-fire-fighting service, he is in love with Holly Hunter. He dies, but returns to serve as the spiritual guide of a shy young pilot (amateurish Brad Johnson), who replaces him in her (grief-stricken) affections. As Dreyfuss's supervisory angel, Audrey Hepburn delivers transcendental inanities in the cadences that have stoned audiences at the Academy Awards; she's become a ceremonial icon. As Dreyfuss's best friend, John Goodman is turned into a fat-jolly-buddy icon; he saves himself from darlingness, but just barely. The new screenplay is credited to Jerry Belson, though it plays like an amalgam.—P.K. (Reviewed in our issue of 1/8/90.) (59th Street East Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Regency. . . . ¶ Art Greenwich Twin; through Feb. 1.)

L'Atalante (1934)—Jean Vigo, who died in his twenties, made only this one feature-length film—a sensuous, poetic love story about a young barge captain on the Seine, who marries and takes his bride with him; after a quarrel she runs off and they lose each other. Jean Dasté and Dita Parlo are the lovers, Michel Simon is the tattooed barge hand who finds her and brings her back. It's a wonderfully spontaneous, unarranged-looking film, photographed by Boris Kaufman, and with a lovely score by Maurice Jaubert. It's also a strange film—much slower and more consciously dreamlike than Vigo's short works. In some ways it's more pleasurable in the memory than while you're seeing it. With Louis Lefèvre. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 1.)

Back to the Future Part II—It's all manic and wacky; it's all twists. The amiably mad inventor Doc Brown (Christopher Lloyd) rushes into the frame to tell teen-age Marty McFly (Michael J. Fox) about new emergencies in the year 2015 or 1955 or an alternate 1985 (brought about by their disrupting the space-time continuum), and they go hurtling off to set things right. The picture is fast and furious but low in spirit; the inventiveness of the director, Robert Zemeckis, and his writing partner, Bob Gale, seems to be on a treadmill in a void. And yet the construction keeps you going—it's like a frenzied daydream that you don't want to break off. With Thomas F. Wilson as the bullies Biff and Griff.—P.K. (12/11/89) (Chelsea Cinemas, and Warner.)

Band of Outsiders (1964)—The two heroes (Claude Brasseur and Sami Frey) begin by playacting crime and violence movies, then really act them out in their lives. Their girl (Anna Karina), wanting to be accepted, tells them there is money in the villa where she lives. And we watch, apprehensive and puzzled, as the three of them go through the robbery they're committing as if it were something in a movie—or a fairy tale. The crime doesn't fit the daydreamers or their milieu: we half expect to be told it's all a joke—that they can't really be committing an armed robbery. This Jean-Luc Godard film is like a reverie of a gangster movie—a gangster movie as students in an espresso bar might remember it or plan it. It has the gangster-film virtues (loyalty, daring), but they are mixed with innocence, amorality, lack of equilibrium. It's as if a French poet took a banal American crime novel and told it to us in terms of the romance and beauty he read between the lines; Godard re-creates the gangsters and the moll with *his* world of associations—seeing them as people in a Paris café, mixing them with Rimbaud, Kafka, Alice in Wonderland. This lyrical tragicomedy is perhaps Godard's most delicately charming film. Script by Godard (he's also the narrator), based on the novel "Fool's Gold," by Dolores Hitchens. In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 4.)

Blaze—The love story of that old raspy-voiced rooster Earl K. Long, three-time governor of Louisiana, and the young red-headed stripper Blaze Starr is bawdy and satirical—it's Rabelaisian. Life was a banquet for Earl, and when he met Blaze he'd found the centerpiece. Ron Shelton, who wrote and directed, cherishes Blaze (Lolita Davidovich, in her first major screen role), and he adores Ol' Earl (Paul Newman), who used his swamp smarts to fight the white supremacists. But



At Theatre 80 St. Marks, "Carnival in Flanders"

Shelton doesn't quite engage with the material; the picture is lame and rhythmless. Still, it's never boring, and it offers a ribald view of Southern politics that contrasts with the stern, melodramatic portrait of Earl's older brother Huey as a fascistic demagogue in the 1949 film "All the King's Men." Newman, using the low, hoarse voice of a lifelong stump speaker, seems an eccentric husk of a man. He begins too far into the character; we have to catch up. By the end, we're with him. With Robert Wuhl, Jerry Hardin, Gailard Sartain, Jeffrey DeMunn, Garland Bunting, and, in one scene, the real Blaze Starr.—P.K. (12/11/89) (Embassy. . . . ¶ Gramercy, and Cinema II; through Feb. 1.)

Born on the 4th of July—An antiwar epic, it's like one of those commemorative issues of *Life*. This one covers 1956 to 1976, and the counterculture is presented in a nostalgic, aesthetically reactionary way: it's made part of our certified public memories. The director, Oliver Stone, plays bumper cars with the camera and uses cutting to jam you into the action, and you can't even enjoy his uncouthness, because it's put at the service of sanctimony. The pure of heart, Catholic and patriotic hero Ron Kovic (Tom Cruise) thinks war is how he'll prove himself a man. He joins the Marine Corps and is sent to Vietnam; in 1968, his spine is severed, and he's left in a wheelchair, impotent, paralyzed from the chest down. The movie is a scream of rage at how he was betrayed, mutilated, neglected; it's also an uplifting account of how he boozed, quarrelled with everyone, and despaired until he stopped being contemptuous of the war protesters and became active in Vietnam Veterans Against the War. Overblown right from the start, this story is constructed as a series of blackout episodes that suggest the Stations of the Cross; rising strings alert you to the heavy stuff. Then the finale—Resurrection—takes Ron into white light, and John Williams lays on the trumpets. The script, by Stone and Kovic, is based on Kovic's autobiography. With Willem Dafoe, Tom Berenger, Raymond J. Barry as the gentle father, Caroline Kava as the castrating Mom, Kyra Sedgwick as Donna, Frank Whaley as Timmy, Cordelia Gonzalez as the whore, Tony Frank as Mr. Wilson, and Abbie Hoffman. Cinematography by Robert Richardson.—P.K. (1/22/90) (Manhattan Twin, Baronet, U. A. East, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, Ziegfeld, and Metro Cinema.)

Camille Claudel—She lived, she loved, she sculpted, she went nuts. Bruno Nuytten's first film is a de-luxe biography of a nearly forgotten (but attractive!) artist who studied with the great Rodin, became his assistant and lover, and then struggled to break free of his influence and discover her own identity as a sculptor. Willful (and comely) as she is, Camille never manages to shake her obsession with Rodin, and she makes a mess of her life and her career. This is rich material, but the movie is a real chore to sit through: it's two and a half hours long, and the pace is sluggish. Nuytten, a superb cinematographer ("French Provincial," "Barocco"), doesn't seem to know how to tell a story—not one as complex as this, anyway. Isabelle Adjani plays Camille (there are obvious similarities to her role in "The Story of Adèle H.") with terrific abandon and intensity, yet the performance isn't satisfying; the film is so poorly shaped as drama that even her most striking moments seem to come out of nowhere. Essentially, "Camille Claudel" is no more than a series of faded tableaux on the themes of *l'art, l'amour, la folie*. It's a deadly mixture of hysteria and inertia. Also with Gérard Depardieu as Rodin, Laurent Grevill as Paul Claudel (Camille's younger brother, who became a well-known writer), and Alain Cuny. The script, by Nuytten and Marilyn Goldin, is based on a biography by Reine-Marie Paris. In French.—T.R. (Paris.)

Crimes and Misdemeanors—Written and directed by Woody Allen, it's a sad, censuring look at an eminent ophthalmologist (Martin Landau) and other crooks in high places who (in Allen's view) have convinced themselves that they can do anything, because they don't think God is watching. Allen is making the film equivalent of a play of ideas, and the ideas have no excitement. He's telling us not just what we already know but what we've already rejected. Woody Allen himself plays a little, grubbing-for-a-living documentary fillmmaker who falls in love but can't compete for the woman (Mia Farrow) against a darling of the media, a tall, egomaniacal TV producer played with a wonderfully smug, screwy abandon by Alan Alda. Except for Alda, and Landau (when he's showing nervous impatience), and Jerry Orbach, who plays the ophthalmologist's shady brother, most of the large cast is proficient yet brittle and dull. With Sam Waterston (as a rabbi who's going blind), Anjelica Huston, Claire Bloom, Joanna Gleason, Caroline Aaron, Nora Ephron in a bit, and Daryl Hannah—uncredited, but looking so luscious she almost stops the show. The bland cinematography is by Sven Nykvist.—P.K. (10/30/89) (Loews Tower East, Quad Cinema, and Carnegie Screening Room.)

Do the Right Thing—The third feature by Spike Lee takes place in the black neighborhood of Bedford-Stuyvesant, Brooklyn, on a punishingly hot day; the focus of the action is a pizzeria, Sal's Famous, which is apparently the last white-owned business on the block; and the climax is a riot sparked by a monstrous act of police brutality. At its most basic, Lee's intention is to demonstrate how in a racially polarized society the slow accumulation of small irritations can swell to something huge and ugly and lethal. It's a solid idea for a movie, and initially the picture provides its share of incidental pleasures. And although most of the many characters Lee shows us are types, at least there are a lot of different ones, and their encounters are often funny. But Lee goes wrong by pushing his material to a "powerful" climax, a Scorsese-like explosion of violence: he sacrifices political clarity for the sake of the big statement. He's nimble-witted and passionate, but his movie seems to shout at us rather than speak to us. In addition to writing, producing, and directing, Lee plays the pivotal role of Mookie, the pizza deliveryman. Others in the cast are Danny Aiello (as Sal), Ossie Davis, Ruby Dee, Giancarlo Esposito, Bill Nunn, Rosie Perez, Joie Lee, John Turturro, and Richard Edson; as a trio of middle-aged street-corner philosophers, Paul Benjamin, Frankie Faison, and Robin Harris are responsible for the movie's best, loosest scenes.—T.R. (7/24/89) (Worldwide Cinemas.)

Driving Miss Daisy—Alfred Uhry's adaptation of his much honored play is still full of manipulative bits—it's virtually all manipulative bits—but the director, Bruce Beresford, understands how to work them while cutting down on their obviousness. Set in Atlanta, starting in 1948, the movie is the story of the companionship that develops between stubborn, suspicious Miss Daisy (Jessica Tandy), a wealthy Jewish widow of seventy-two, and her resilient chauffeur, Hoke (Morgan Freeman), a widower about a decade younger than she is. Essentially, it's about how he changes her. He's made upright, considerate, humane—he's made perfect—so that nothing will disturb our appreciation of the gentle, bittersweet reverie we're watching. But it's acted (and directed) eloquently. Tandy and Freeman achieve a beautiful equilibrium. And Dan Aykroyd comes through with a fine performance as Miss Daisy's good-old-boy son. With Esther Rolle and Patti LuPone.—P.K. (12/25/89) (68th St. Playhouse, 8th St. Playhouse, Chelsea Cinemas, 57th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and West Side Cinema.)

Drugstore Cowboy—Nihilistic humor rarely bubbles up in a movie as freely as it does here. Set in Portland, Oregon, in 1971, the story is about two couples who live together and travel around the Pacific Northwest robbing hospitals and pharmacies, grabbing fistfuls of pills and capsules. They're like a junkie version of Clyde Barrow's gang. The director, Gus Van Sant, takes us inside a lot of underground attitudes: the druggies are monomaniacal about leading an aimless existence—they see themselves as romantic figures. They're comic, but they're not put down for being comic. The picture keeps you laughing because it's so nonjudgmental. Van Sant is half in and half out of the desire of adolescents to remain kids forever. As the gang's twenty-six-year-old leader, Matt Dillon brings the role a light self-mockery that helps set the tone of the film, and Kelly Lynch is strikingly effective as the leader's wife. Also with James Le Gros, Heather Graham, James Remar, Max Perlich, Beah Richards, Grace Zabriskie, and William Burroughs. The script, by the director and Daniel Yost, was based on an unpublished novel by James Fogle, who's in prison for drug-related robberies.—P.K. (10/30/89) (Angelika Film Center, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Enemies, A Love Story—Emotionally overwhelming. Adapted from Isaac Bashevis Singer's New York City novel, set in 1949—a post-Holocaust sex farce in which three passionately jealous women are in love with a guilt-ridden, self-effacing man. The director, Paul Mazursky, has gathered a superbly balanced cast and kept the action so smooth that the viewer is carried along on a tide of mystical slyness. Ron Silver is the Polish-Jewish intellectual who survived the Final Solution by hiding in a hayloft. Margaret Sophie Stein is the Gentile peasant (now his wife) who risked her life to take care of him. Lena Olin is his diabolically willful mistress, a survivor of the camps. Anjelica Huston is the wife (with an erotic aura) he thought was killed by the Nazis. This richly satisfying movie is restrained, yet it has its own deeply crazy turmoil. Mazursky pulls the rug out from under us, and we drop through the farce. With Alan King, Judith Malina, Phil Leeds, and Mazursky. The script is by Roger L. Simon and the director.—P.K. (12/25/89) (Angelika Film Center, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, and Carnegie Hall Cinema.)

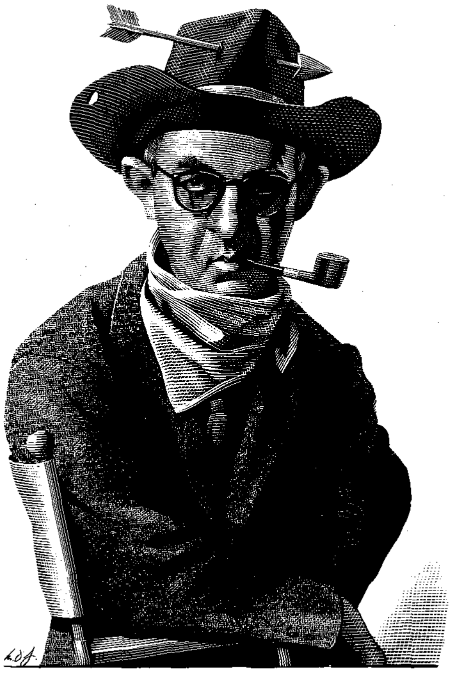
The Fabulous Baker Boys—Two lounge pianists (brothers, played by Beau and Jeff Bridges) add a vocalist (Michelle Pfeiffer) to their act, and she changes their lives. This romantic fantasy has a forties-movie sultriness and an eighties movie-struck melancholy. Put them together and you have a movie in which eighties glamour is being defined. The young writer-director Steve Kloves trips off your bluesy, narcissistic feelings about popular music and commercial-movie emotions; he invites you to laugh if you want to. (You feel the heat even if you're laughing.) The three stars seem perfect at what they're doing—newly minted icons. When Pfeiffer (who does her own singing) delivers "Makin' Whoopee," while crawling over a grand piano like a long-legged kitty-cat, she rivals Rita Hayworth in "Gilda."—P.K. (10/16/89) (Angelika Film Center.)

Glory—With Matthew Broderick, Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Cary Elwes; directed by Edward Zwick. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Gemini, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center.)

Henry V—This fast-paced version, adapted and directed by its young star, Kenneth Branagh, isn't exultant, like the version made forty-five years earlier by Laurence Olivier. Branagh emphasizes the price paid for war: the bloodshed. And, in keeping with his generation's supposed disillusion with war, he minimizes the play's glorification of the English fighting man. His conception of how to film the play is to look closely at the conniving, the misgivings, the ego wars. (This epic noir doesn't indicate why the French lost at Agincourt.) Branagh is not an overnight great moviemaker; his attempts at spectacular effects strain his inventiveness. But as an actor he has something of James Cagney's confident Irishness; he's intensely likable, with a beautiful, expressive voice and a straightforwardness that drives the whole film ahead. He and the other performers are so up that you feel their pride in working on true dramatic poetry. It's a company of stars: Paul Scofield as the melancholy French king whose face foretells the doom of his army, Christopher Ravenscroft as the herald Mountjoy, Derek Jacobi as the Chorus, Judi Dench as Mistress Quickly, Robbie Coltrane as Falstaff, Brian Blessed as Exeter, Richard Briers as Bardolph, Richard Easton as the Constable of France, Alec McCowen as Ely, Robert Stephens as Pistol, Emma Thompson as Katherine, Geraldine McEwan as Alice, Christian Bale as Falstaff's boy, and, best of all, perhaps, Ian Holm as the chattering Welshman Fluellen.—P.K. (11/27/89) (Quad Cinema, and Festival.)

Internal Affairs—With Richard Gere and Andy Garcia, directed by Michael Figgis. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Second Avenue Theatre. . . . ¶ Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Loews Astor Plaza; through Feb. 1. . . . ¶ Bijou Cinema, and Embassy; starting Feb. 2.)

The Little Mermaid—Disney-style kitsch. It's technologically sophisticated, but with just about all the simpering old Disney values in place. They're just slightly updated: the Lit-



A John Ford festival at the American Museum of the Moving Image

When Stepin Fetchit (Lincoln Perry) died in 1985, the A.P. obituary summarized him as "a shuffling, headscratching servant" in nineteen-thirties movies whose persona "came to be viewed as a negative stereotype of blacks." John Ford's 1934 Kentucky-fried idyll "Judge Priest" (playing February 3 at the American Museum of the Moving Image) is best known as a showcase for that inspired, satirical Everyman, Will Rogers. But it's also one of the most frequently revived Stepin Fetchit movies, and the image the black actor leaves here is anything but negative.

Circuit-court judge William (Billy) Priest is Rogers' embodiment of Down Yonder sagacity, democracy, and charm—and Fetchit's Jeff Poindexter is the judge's sidekick. The film opens as Priest's enemy, the pompous state senator Horace K. Maydew (Berton Churchill), tries to send Fetchit up the river as a chicken thief. The senator bores us with bogus oratory; Jeff wins us over by snoozing through it. When the judge rouses Jeff from slumber, Fetchit speaks out in a voice that's as uproarious as anything conceived by Peter Sellers: it's what molasses would sound like if it talked.

The humor of the scene comes from Fetchit's virtuoso obliviousness. Even the judge finds Jeff's blasé attitude seductive. The sequence ends with Fetchit telling Rogers that he's caught some giant catfish in an unlikely angling spot by using beef liver for bait. The next shot: Jeff and the judge, just goin' fishin'. After you've seen "Judge Priest," it's easy to understand Fetchit's pride in his work with Rogers: "When people saw me and Will Rogers like brothers, that said something to them."

tle Mermaid—a teen-age tootsie in a flirty seashell bra—is like Sleeping Beauty plus tomboy spunk. The film does have a cheerful calypso number ("Under the Sea," by Howard Ashman and Alan Menken), and the color is bright—at least, until the mermaid goes on land, when everything seems to dull out. Pat Carroll provides the voice of Ursula, the Sea Witch; Samuel E. Wright provides the voice of Sebastian.—P.K. (12/11/89) (Quad Cinema, 23rd St. West Triplex, Metro Cinema, and West Side Cinema. Matinées only. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin, and Guild; through Feb. 1.)

The Memory of Justice (1975)—Centering on the definitions of war crimes formulated at the Nuremberg Trials, Marcel Ophuls examines the atrocities committed in Vietnam and other places; he attempts nothing less than an investigation of the nature of war guilt, and the film runs four hours and thirty-eight minutes. Striving for complexity, Ophuls extends his inquiry in so many directions that he loses his subject; despite some remarkable footage, the film is chaotic, plodding, and excessively self-conscious.—P.K. (Thalia SoHo; Feb. 4.)

Music Box—When the cast and the script are right for Costa-Gavras—as they are here—he can give a courtroom melodrama the pull and excitement of a thriller. Jessica Lange is the Chicago lawyer defending her retired steelworker father (Armin Mueller-Stahl) against deportation to Hungary, where the Communist government is waiting to try him for war crimes. The emotional core of the movie is that during the trial, as the Second World War victims give their accounts, the daughter begins to lose faith in her father's innocence. There are no flashbacks; there's no shock apparatus. We simply take in what they're saying, and we watch her take it in. Lange verges on the astounding. Costa-Gavras provides a low-key, controlled atmosphere, and she fills it with passion. The final plot developments feel fake, but this is a remarkably lucid piece of storytelling. The script is by Joe Eszterhas; with Frederic Forrest, Donald Moffat, Lukas Haas, Michael Rooker, and Sol Frieder as the bald old man with the goatee, and Elzbieta Czyzewska as the precise, closed-faced woman who describes how she was raped.—P.K. (1/8/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Plaza, and Loews Paramount.)

My Left Foot—The greatness of Daniel Day-Lewis's performance as the Dubliner Christy Brown, a victim of cerebral palsy who became a painter and a writer, is that he pulls you inside Christy's frustration and rage (and his bottomless thirst). There's nothing soft or maudlin about this movie's view of Christy: he's anguished and locked in, yet excitingly insolent. The movie may tear you apart, but it's the story of a triumphantly tough guy who lived it up, and Day-Lewis's interpretation has some of the sexual seductiveness that was so startling in Olivier's Richard III. This is the first film of the Irish playwright-director Jim Sheridan, who wrote the superb screenplay with another Irish playwright, Shane Connaughton. With Brenda Fricker, Ray MacAnally, Fiona Shaw, Ruth McCabe, and Hugh O'Conor playing Christy as a child.—P.K. (10/2/89) (Lincoln Plaza.)

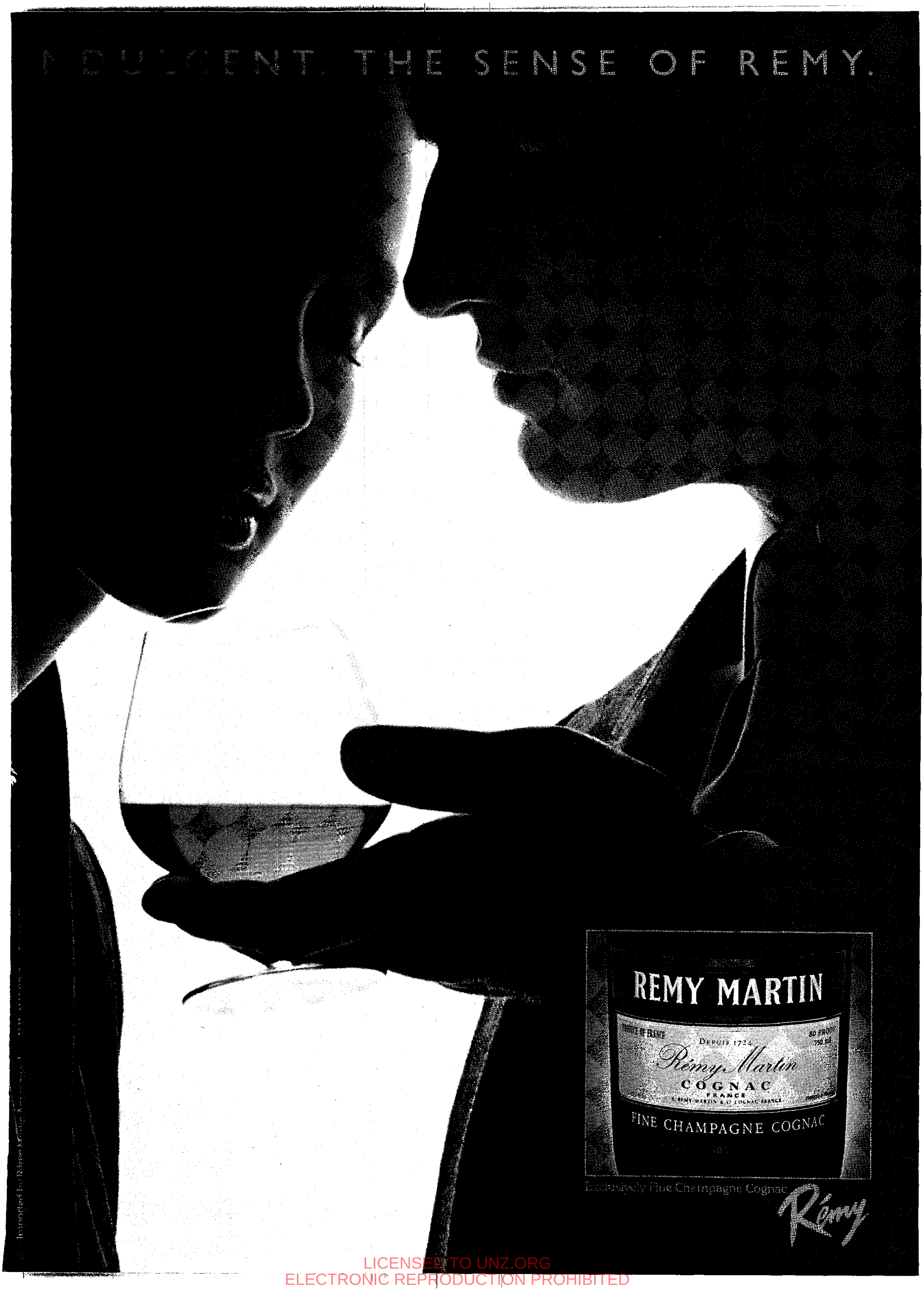
Roger & Me—Michael Moore's widely praised muckraking documentary is about his two-and-a-half-year pursuit of Roger Smith, the chairman of General Motors, who, according to the film, is directly responsible for closing eleven plants and bringing about the destruction of Flint, Michigan—GM's birthplace and Moore's home town. The film purports to show what was happening in Flint from February, 1987, to August, 1989, but what happens is that Moore, a big shambling joker who's the director, producer, writer, and star, deadpans his way through interviews with an assortment of unlikely people, who are used as stooges. He chases gags and improvises his own version of history: in his account of the plant closings, the worker layoffs, and the construction of tourist attractions, he compresses the events of many years and fiddles with the time sequence. He comes on in a give-'em-hell style, but he breaks faith with the audience. And he does something that is humanly very offensive: "Roger & Me" uses its leftism as a superior attitude. Members of the audience can laugh at ordinary working people and still feel that they're taking a politically correct position.—P.K. (1/8/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex. . . . ¶ Cinema I; through Feb. 1.)

SEX, LIES, AND VIDEOTAPE—Steven Soderbergh's smooth, handsome first feature generates a fair degree of psychological tension out of next to nothing. It's a triangle drama with a cunning little kink in it. The triangle consists of Ann (Andie MacDowell), a beautiful young Southern woman who has "never really been that much into sex"; her husband, John (Peter Gallagher), a sleazy yuppie lawyer; and her younger sister, Cynthia (Laura San Giacomo), who's sleeping with John. The kink is an old college pal of John's, named Graham (James Spader), a soft-spoken drifter who comes to town and changes everybody's life. Graham has sworn off sex, because, he says, it's the only way for him to stay honest: he's impotent, except when he's watching one of his dozens of home videos—all of them interviews he has conducted with women about sex. He's like a retired gunslinger, a laconic hombre who won't pull his artillery out of its holster because he's seen too much killin' already. This is "Shane" remade as a Southern psychodrama. But there's some real conviction in it—a mixed-up fervor that keeps us watching.—T.R. (8/7/89) (Angelika Film Center, and Cinema 3rd Avenue.)

Swept Away (1974)—A Sicilian Communist deckhand (Giancarlo Giannini) working on a yacht and the rich blond shrew (Mariangela Melato) who chartered the ship for a pleasure cruise are marooned on an island. She gave him a bad time when she had the upper hand, so when he takes charge on the island and starts whacking her around maybe one can say that he isn't hitting a woman, he's hitting the capitalist class. However, when she kisses his feet and gathers flowers to garland his phallus, she isn't the capitalist class, she's a woman who finds fulfillment in recognizing a man as her master. Uncorrupted by social forces, the couple live the "true" relations of the sexes and find paradise. But they go back; she can't resist returning to her life of privilege, and he is left heartbroken. Under the guise of a socialist parable about the economic determinism of personal behavior (class interests determine sexual choice, etc.), the writer-director, Lina Wertmüller, has actually introduced a new version of the story of Eve, the spoiler. Despite the clamor of politics in Wertmüller's movies, her basic pitch is to popular prejudice. This erotic fantasy is like a modern version of Valentino's "The Sheik"—blissful rape for the trendy, dissatisfied liberated woman. And solid reassurance for the men in the audience that women only want to be mastered, yet are sly little beasts, never to be trusted. The picture stays on the same high energy level throughout—the characters never stop yelling and shrieking. In Italian.—P.K. (Cinema Village; Feb. 4.)

The War of the Roses—Michael Douglas and Kathleen Turner play Oliver and Barbara Rose, a yuppie couple whose banally "perfect" marriage isn't strong enough to survive their individual mid-life crises. When they decide to divorce, things get real ugly: the Roses' hatred and pettiness keep escalating, to the point of absurdity and far beyond. These successful, eighties-style people are revealed as greedy, self-centered, infantile: they'd rather die than have to sacrifice either their egos or their possessions. (This social observation may not come as a surprise to everybody.) "The War of the Roses," written by Michael Leeson (from a novel by Warren Adler), is one of Hollywood's periodic attempts at black comedy, and, like most of its predecessors, it's not quite black enough and not quite funny enough. The director, Danny DeVito, who also acts in the film, seems a bit too pleased with his own outrageousness. The picture has a peculiar, not very satisfying tone: smugly savage.—T.R. (34th St. East, Coronet, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ Bijou Cinema; through Feb. 1.)

Zero for Conduct (1933)—School as seen through the eyes of children. Jean Vigo's forty-four-minute comedy-fantasy about a schoolchildren's revolt is one of the most poetic films ever made and one of the most influential, both in theme (as in Truffaut's "The 400 Blows" and Lindsay Anderson's "If . . .") and in its leaping continuity (as in Godard's "Breathless"). Vigo himself was clearly influenced by Abel Gance's pillow-fight sequence in "Napoléon." In French.—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; Feb. 1.)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SAAB

THE
NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

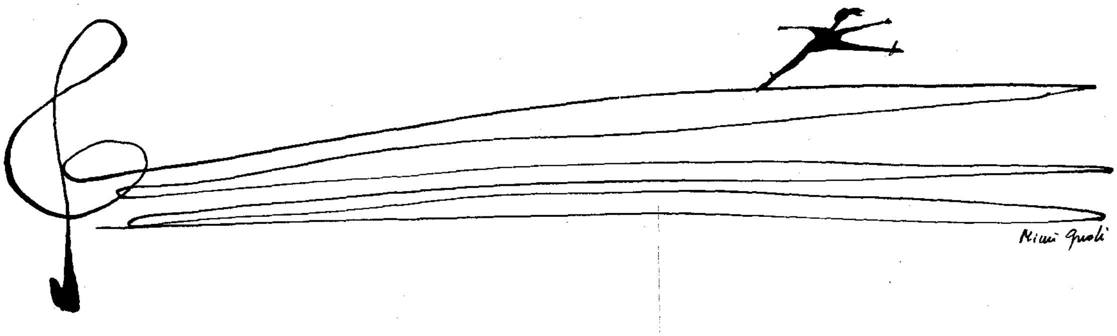
Notes and Comment

NOT since before the Second World War has the United States been as peripheral on the world stage as it is now. A major drama is taking place in the Soviet Union and in Europe, and we are not involved in it. Now we are just who we are, without a leading role to justify and enhance our actions. Our invasion of Panama, for example, was not disguised in Cold War security considerations; more than anything else, it suggested the pique of a bully whose flunky has turned on him. Our rapprochement with China's oppressive regime was not glorified by considerations of preserving the balance of power in a time of nuclear danger; rather, it seemed to arise from frustration at being on the sidelines—from an itch to assert the presence and the importance of the United States. And both actions seemed to ignore what was going on in the center of the stage. We invaded Panama at a time when Gorbachev's restraint in Eastern Europe was dazzling the world, and we rewarded a totalitarian regime when the world was agog at the collapse of totalitarianism elsewhere. Perhaps the United States just isn't used to following a lead, even when the lead is a good one.

This awkwardness is not surprising. The swift rearrangement of international relationships that has been taking place in the last year has had drastic effects on our standing in the world—effects that are hard on the national ego. Over the past decade and a half, Americans have had to adjust their image of the United States to a less heroic scale. But what has happened in Eastern Europe and the Soviet Union has accelerated that process by suddenly diminishing the importance of military strength, the one area in which we remained paramount in the world. Now the economic scale, on which our importance has for some time been reduced, is the primary one by which international standing is measured.

Until recently, there was a longstanding tussle between people at the State Department who urged Administrations to avoid squabbling with Japan over mere commercial matters—to take instead the "high road" of international-security considerations—and people at the Department of Commerce who, nearly frantic over the realities of our commercial relationship with Japan, pressed for the "low road" of economic retaliation. On the high road, we were a protective superpower; on the low road, we were a losing competitor. Now the low road is all there is. Our relationship with Europe has taken a similar turn. We've known that sometime in the future the European Economic Community would become a substantial economic competitor of the United States, but this knowledge was nestled in the larger context of our military role in Europe. Despite strained efforts to imagine how we might preserve that role in some form, it seems clear that the rationale for it is being swept away, leaving a relationship that must be measured in cold economic terms—terms that do not flatter us in the way to which we have so long been accustomed.

The principal danger for us in this situation is that the gap between our pride and our revised standing will prove too great, and the political pressure for impulsive assertions of power will grow. The frenetic jubilation over our thin triumph in Panama was a sign of just such a pent-up craving. Meanwhile, a huge military establishment and old habits of deploying it stand by. In the last few months, the United States military has been active in the Philippines and in El Salvador as well as in Panama, and just three weeks ago naval ships were steaming for the coast of Colombia, to intercept drug traffickers, until that country, disenchanted by the invasion of Panama, objected strenuously. Before the Second World War, Franklin Roosevelt had to nudge a reluctant, isolationist United States into engagement with



the outside world; now we need a President who can calm a national appetite for global swaggering and develop a national willingness to look at who we are, with our homeless, our poor schools, our struggling industries.

Our national security—the age-old justification for global swaggering—now depends precisely on our facing those problems, for our strength in the future is almost certainly tied to the health of our society. To the extent that swaggering keeps us from looking at ourselves, it is a threat to our security, and so are the outdated ideas about our standing which encourage arrogance and the need to act on it. Although it's hard for us as a nation to undergo this sudden change in our apparent stature, there is actually something appealing—and even a possibility of greatness—in the prospect of a more modest United States. A United States that was burdened by neither the corruptions of militarism nor those of self-righteousness; a country that saw itself as a mixture of good and bad, like other countries; a country that was committed to solving internal problems instead of either saving or bullying others—such a country could have enormous authority in the world.

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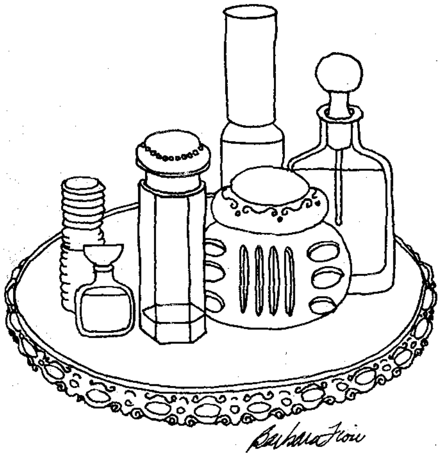
Last Frontier

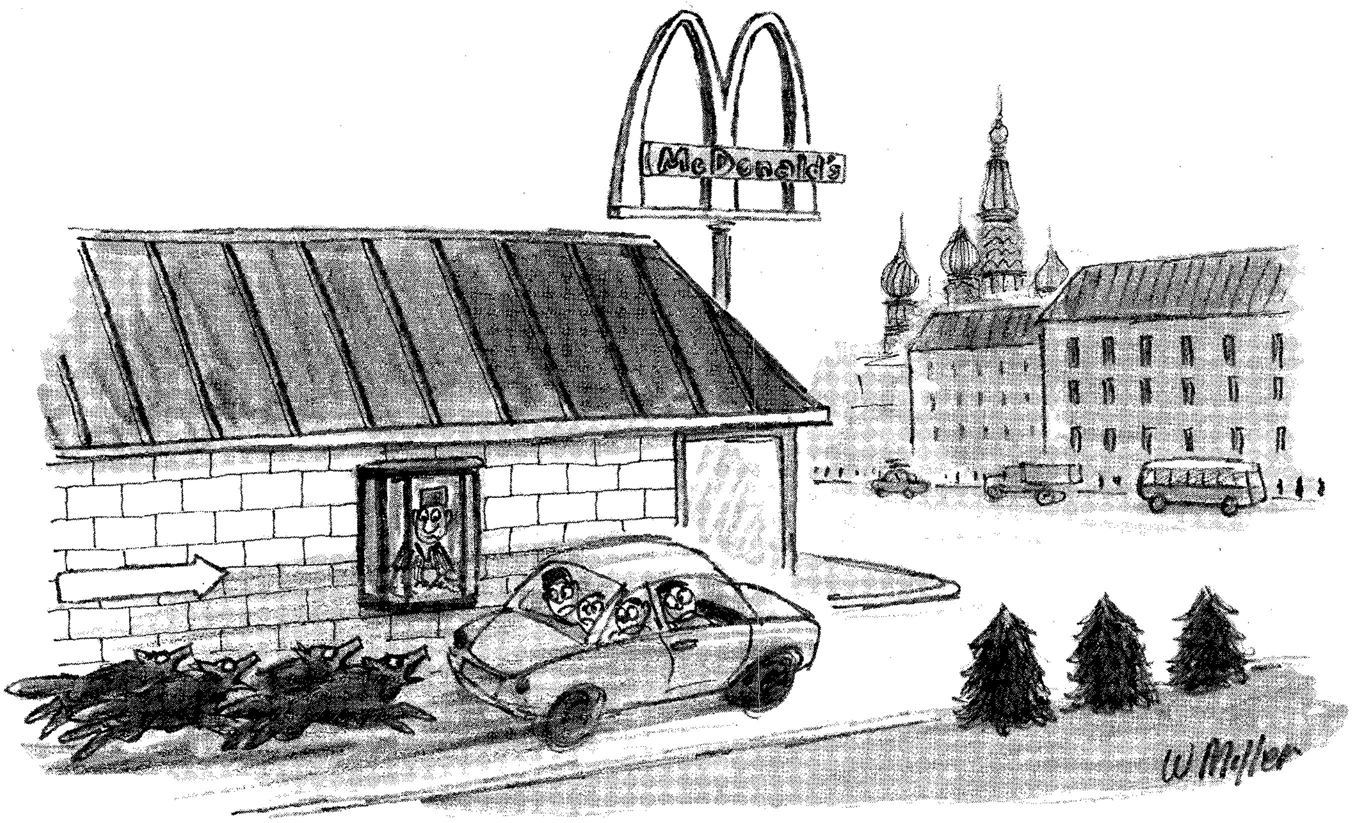
BELIEVE it or not, Alan Abel, the man who masterminded that fake thirty-five-million-dollar-lottery winner a few weeks ago, pulled the stunt for humanitarian reasons. Mr. Abel is a square-built middle-aged man who has a low center of gravity, gray-brown hair, longish sideburns, pointy eyebrows, and a gigantic, mobile smile that turns slightly sheepish when he drops one-liners like "I've given up *smoking until this* lung-cancer scare blows over." It is entirely possible to imagine him, Art Buchwald, and Allan Sherman in a room somewhere giving each other noogies. Mr. Abel says that he is a fundamentally serious person, however, and one recent afternoon he could be found wearing a sane-as-anything mid-level-executive outfit—navy blazer, gray slacks, loafers—and looking contemplative as he sat in his office, which is a brick-red train caboose parked in his back yard, in Westport. Mr. Abel retires to the caboose when he wants to devise new pranks. "I find it easy to come up with nonsense," he explained, settling onto a lumpy couch that takes up about half the caboose. "This is a good place to work—it's a good place for me to think about exploring the mind. The mind is the last frontier. I like to play, and my friends and my mind are my toys."

How do the humanitarian considerations fit into the last frontier? It was Mr. Abel's opinion that the public was sick and tired of seeing every lottery jackpot end up in the hands of some pipefitter-from-Queens type, and that most people playing the lottery were getting traumatized by always losing—sometimes by just one or two digits—and he figured that everyone would be cheered up if there were to be a young winner with long hair and a glossy smile, so he provided one. Mr. Abel would also like to take credit for the aliens in Russia last summer. He claims he had been sitting around in the caboose worrying that they didn't have any fun in Russia, and that there had never been a U.F.O. spotted there, so he sent detailed plans for a spaceship and aliens to a couple of Russians he had listed in his hoax-lovers Rolodex. "What I do is give people a kick in the intellect," Mr. Abel is fond of saying. "I like a big audience. If I'd been born five hundred years ago, I'd have been a court jester. If I had a lot of money and if I were an evil person, I could take over the world. My hope is that people see the sociological significance of what I do. This is a mental exercise. No banana peels, no buckets of water falling on people's heads, no whoopee cushions—that's low class."

That afternoon, Mr. Abel was still fielding calls from around the world about the lottery prank. To date, he has successfully published his own fake obituary (the *Times*, 1980), passed off phony organizations, including Females for Felons, Omar's School for Panhandlers, Society for Indecency to Naked Animals, and the International Sex Bowl Olympics (many talk shows, many years), and trick-or-treated his own neighbors (Westport, the eighties). He may or may not have put a phony referee in a football game (Superbowl XVII, Redskins vs. Dolphins, 1983), and brought a faux Salman Rushdie out of hiding (American Booksellers Association convention, 1989). But for some reason the lottery prank has proved to be his biggest hit. "This was the whopper—the media loved it," Mr. Abel said. "They loved having someone pretty and pleasant as a winner, for a change, and Lee Chirillo, the actress who played the part of the winner, was very good at it. When the electronic media jumped in so fast—whew, I honestly wasn't expecting such a big blast. How do you arrange something like the lottery hoax? It's really simple. I just wrote a script and then rounded up my group of merry pranksters, and we each chipped in a hundred and fifty dollars for a room at the Omni Park Central Hotel and champagne, and then we faxed the wire services saying we had the winner. Before we started, I said to my pranksters, 'Look, we'll produce this scenario and we'll party. Whatever happens happens.' Most of my pranksters are actors and actresses with day jobs. I've always got along best with people younger than I am. We had a great time."



Mr. Abel stood up, stepped over to a desk, picked up a set of drumsticks, and began pounding out a beat on a drum pad. "Basic rock beat!" he yelled over the drumming. "Easy as anything! Anyone can do it!" That answered a question a lot of people have about major-league hoaxsters like Mr. Abel: How does the guy make a living? "I teach drumming!" he yelled. "I teach a class called Learn to Drum!" He segued into the drumbeat of "Bolero," and then put down the drumsticks and said, "I also teach a class in comedy to people with no sense of humor, called Learn to Be Funny. I show them how to do things like—Oh, if they're shy, I suggest they take a bunch of hard-boiled eggs to a party



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and surreptitiously slip them into people's pockets and handbags. It's an icebreaker. I've composed and published sixteen pieces of concert music. My wife and I directed a very successful movie called 'Is There Sex After Death?' and starring Buck Henry, and we made a lot of money with that. I've written many books, and I'm working on one right now called 'Abel Raises Cain.' I'm in the creative field. I also teach a class called Don't Get Mad—Get Even. My philosophy is that it's healthier to give ulcers than to get them."

Mr. Abel named P. T. Barnum and Jonathan Swift as his greatest sources of inspiration, and went on to say, "My mother had no sense of humor whatsoever. My father, though, was a very flamboyant general-store owner in a small town in Ohio. He'd do things like put a big lump of worthless glass in the window with a sign saying 'Come In and Find Out About This,' and people would. He'd put 'Limit—Two to a Customer' in front of the things that wouldn't sell, and they'd be gone in a minute. Maybe the learning experience in this is that you shouldn't believe everything you read. I don't. When people tell me I'm crazy, I say, "*Me* crazy? You know what I think is crazy? I think bowling is crazy—taking a ball and rolling it down the floor. *That's* crazy. Exploring the mind is not crazy."

The Village Market Party

JUST as we were worrying that the social season had ended, we received an invitation to a reception at the Village Market of Wilton, Connecticut. The Village Market has been the town grocery store for fifty-five years, and last November, the original owners, the Piersalls, sold it to Peter and Cathie Keating. Mr. Keating, a nice young man who has worked at the store for ten years, is approved of by the old-time clientele, because he intends to keep the place small and personal, just the way it has always been. In the town of Wilton, it is more than a grocery store. It is the kind of place people feel so strongly about that over six hundred of them left their homes late on an icy Sunday afternoon in January to attend the party, which took place from five to seven and gave everyone an opportunity to greet the new owners.

Mr. Keating closed the Village Market an hour early, at three o'clock, to prepare, and when it reopened it glowed. Big ferns had been placed at the ends of each checkout counter. Blue and white helium balloons tethered to the cash registers swayed above sprays of roses, carnations, and tulips on the stilled conveyor belts. Many of the bouquets had been sent by customers, including a local Boy Scout troop; one dazzling arrangement of tropical blossoms came all the way from Hawaii. The butcher's counter was transformed into a bar serving Chablis, Perrier, beer, and sparkling cider. The John Nuhn Jazz Quartet, down from Amherst, played swing melodies between the pretzel shelves and the frozen-sausage case.

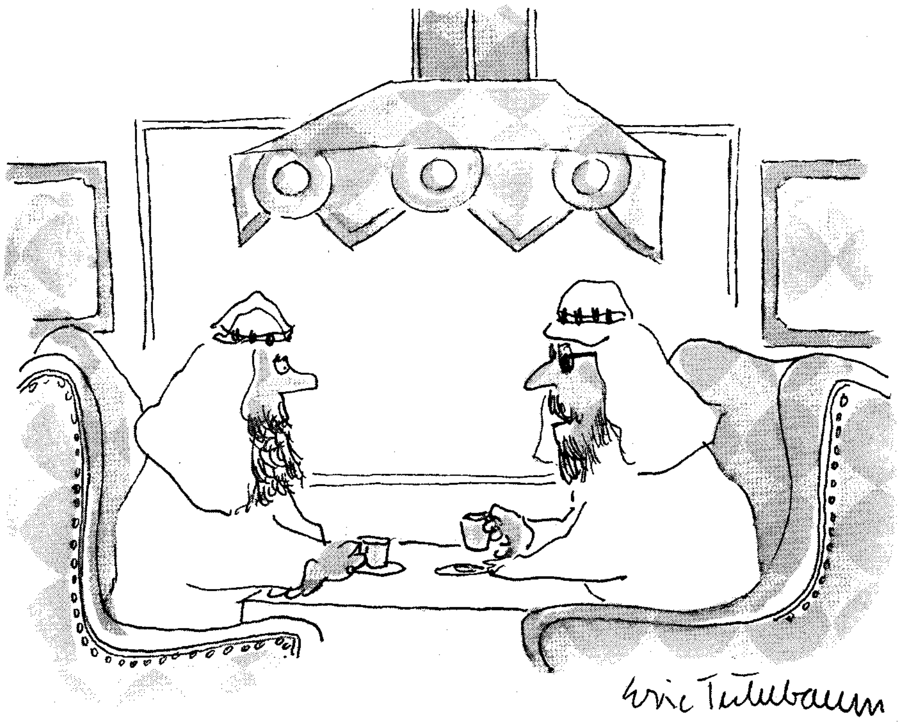
In the open area between the aisles and the checkout counters, tables had been set up and covered with blue cloths. One table held crackers and cheese. On another table were crudités and scooped-out cabbages filled with dip. A third table offered hot food: Cajun chicken wings, Swedish meatballs, and barbecued ribs. Near the express lane (no more than ten items, please) were a large liver pâté with a crock of cornichons and a molded salmon loaf. Nancy Dolnier, the head cashier, marvelled at how much work it must have been to cook and peel all the shrimp that some waiters were offering around.

The party got rolling fast: the music grew hotter and the conversation louder. Soon Aisle A-1-B (ketchup, mustard, dressings, oil, vinegar) was impassable; a crowd at the Roll-O-Matic-mop display also blocked traffic; and the fish case, in which two whole silver salmon were displayed so that they appeared to be frolicking on ice, was hidden behind a cluster of partiers. Waiters with trays of mini-tacos, sausage en croûte, and spinach-filled phyllo rolls had to push their way through. At the front of the store, the path to the meatballs was jammed.

A thin young malcontent, apparently from the next town, leaned against the pita breads and grumbled, "Ridgefield has many things Wilton doesn't have," but he was a minority of one. To most of the revellers, the Village Market party was an opportunity to enjoy the special kind of small-town friendship that is practiced daily in the aisles of the grocery store but is rarely celebrated, or even acknowledged. A diminutive older woman stepped up to a man and said, "Hello, remember me?" He didn't until she added, "I'm your safe-deposit lady." Also at the party were the ice-cream-shop lady and the bookstore lady, and near the Oreos we met one of the town's doctors, Arthur D'Souza, with his wife, Jeanne. There was even a celebrity at the party: David Canary, who plays twin brothers on television's "All My Children," one of whom recently had a stroke. When we spotted him, he was on his feet and alert, leaning against a display of Tic Tac breath mints.

Nearly all the guests were dressed up —men in ties and tweed jackets with a starched white handkerchief in the pocket; women in silk dresses, many topped with little silver-buttoned wool Tyrolian jackets. Charlie Gigliotti, who has worked at the Village Market longer than anyone else, stood back against the jars of olives for a quiet moment with one of the butchers—who instead of his apron was wearing a snug sports coat and a carnation boutonniere—and said that he remembered rewarding some of the evening's most distinguished-looking guests with lollipops for being good boys and girls. Tara McHale, a cashier who was wearing a queenly purple frock, looked over the crowd and said, "We have elegant customers, don't you think?"

An elderly couple arrived, and as the wife, who had a corsage pinned to her fur stole, waited for her husband by a coatrack set up near the front of the store, she told us that the party had been the main topic of conversation that week, and that at church that morning some people had said they wondered if they ought to bring a gift. As her husband returned to her side, he smoothed down the front panels of his corduroy sports jacket, then offered her his arm and said, "Dear, shall we walk down the center aisle?"



"Through it all we're still heavily invested in oil—primarily Picasso and Rembrandt."

Remedies

LEAVING an allergic Yorkshire terrier complaining in the examining room, Dr. C. W. (Pete) Schaubhut, a partner in the East Village Veterinarian, on Eldridge Street, came into the clinic's treatment room looking for the right medicine—graphite or maybe poison ivy. Bearded and Bunyanesque, and with a flannel shirt hanging out over jeans, Dr. Schaubhut scanned racks of animal, vegetable, and mineral essences while his associate, Dr. Mary Finger, played with a cat on the floor. "Himalayans are so stupid," she said, "but they're great blood donors." Dr. Schaubhut chose the pellets he wanted and returned to the Yorkie. "Thanks to Pete, I'm about ten per cent homeopathic now," Dr. Finger said, sitting back on her heels. "I still do use conventional drugs more. A Great Dane with diarrhea—you have to hit that with a hammer."

Of three or four thousand practicing homeopaths in this country, perhaps seventy-five are veterinarians, and Dr. Schaubhut told us that as far as he knows he is the only homeopathic vet in New York. He was on his midday break now, and was sitting in his apartment, not far away, with a three-legged, one-eyed cat named Ricky affixed to his chest. The place looked as if it had been burglarized—clothes flung about, furniture askew, a guitar and some half-finished landscape paintings underfoot. Homeopathy, he explained, operates on the principle of "like cures like": a natural substance that causes symptoms similar to the ones a patient is suffering from is administered in tiny doses to stimulate the body's defenses; a common homeopathic remedy for hay fever, for instance, is a microdose of onion. "Dr. Samuel Hahnemann, a German physician—amazing man—discovered the principle two hundred years ago, and built the system doing provings on himself," Dr. Schaubhut said. The system flourished in Europe thereafter, and in this country until the turn of the century, when the American Medical Association finally beat it back, he went on, and now, because of new research supporting its use, and also because of endorsements by celebrities ranging from the British royal family to Tina Turner, there's a homeopathy boomlet here.

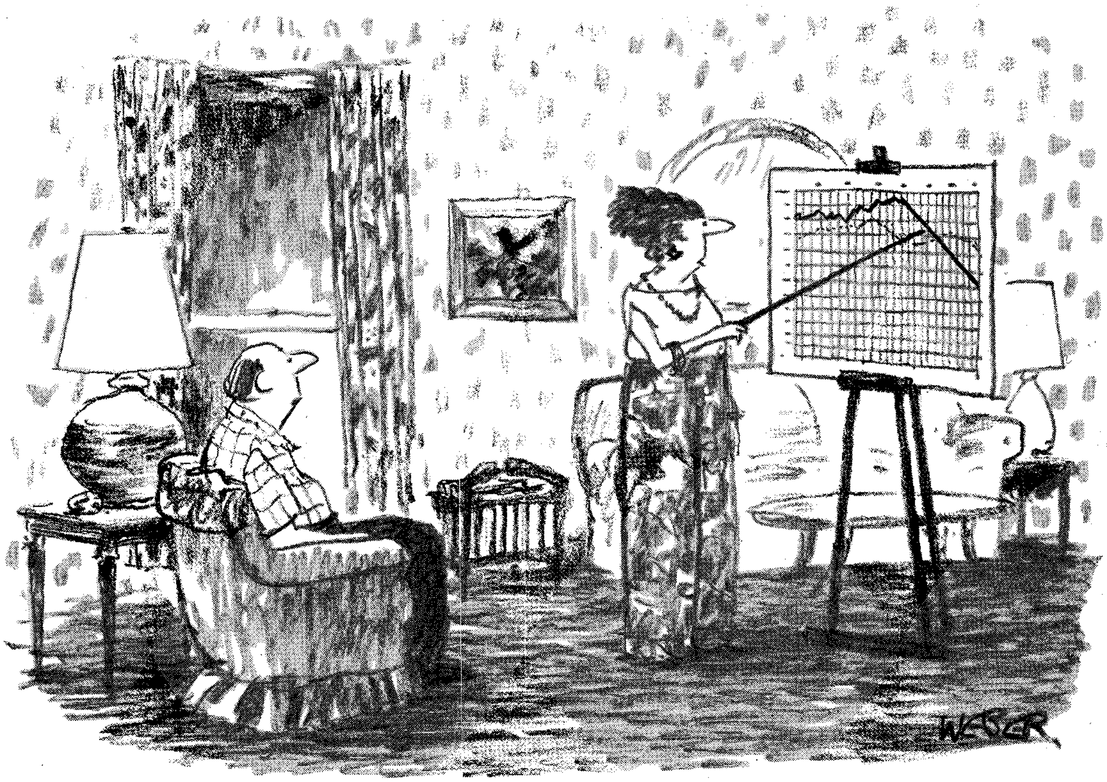
Dr. Schaubhut told us that he had grown up in Indianapolis, and that as a young man he had been at a loss about what to do with himself. "I was interested in mechanical things—guns in particular," he said. "I spent three years at the Colorado School of Trades, mostly making rifles." Unable to get a long-term job doing that, he found himself in class one day at Purdue University's School of Veterinary Medicine.

"Why?" we asked.

"A door opened" was his reply. Then he told us that following his graduation, in 1969, he spent two years studying radiology at Cornell University, two years in private practice on Long Island, and then twelve years as the director of in-patient care at the A.S.P.C.A.'s Bergh Memorial Animal Hospital, at Ninety-second and York. "Even then, I was looking for ways of doing things that medicine tells us we can't do," he said. "First, I studied radionics, exploring the subtle energy fields that surround and interpenetrate the physical body. And then—oh, God—I built orgone boxes and pyramids and got into acupuncture. Animals that had been relegated to the dustbin—not all of them, but many—would get better. People would call and say, you know, 'He jumped on the bed!' But the fussiness of the procedure—having animals coming back and coming back, and putting all those needles in—drove me nuts." He took up homeopathy six years ago, and, while he still does some conventional surgery, he treats about seventy-five per cent of the hundreds of animals he sees each month with herbal or mineral prescriptions. For example, a bull mastiff named Jake, formerly staggering with arthritis, gets three homeopathic remedies. Dr. Schaubhut listed them: "*Rhus toxicodendron*—that's the poison-ivy plant. *Bryonia alba*, the wild hop. And *Ruta graveolens*, common garden rue, which is great for healing ligament injuries." He also told us about a python that had not had a bowel movement for three months, though it had eaten eight or nine mice. It received a dose of nux vomica—literally, "emetic nut"—and it had a stool that night.

With people, Dr. Schaubhut went on, homeopathic remedies are traditionally chosen for both "psyche and soma"; in other words, the physician treats the whole patient. "With animals, it's a little different, because animals do not have a cognitive sense," he said. "Their souls reside more in a group soul, still in the astral realm. They don't think, but they do have a well-developed emotional nature. And I listen to owners in making diagnoses. Owners will say, 'It looks like, it feels like . . . ' I pay a lot of attention to that. Most people are very empathetic, in tune with their animals. Of course, some owners make their pets sick. We see this all the time. Lots of people are filled with anger and hate, and animals are like young children, very impressionable. Under harsh handling, pets may become insane or develop a terminal disease. But there are homeopathic remedies for fears, too. I'll show you the repertory."

Peeling the cat off, he led us outside, and back to the clinic. There were yelps from the waiting room and, from somewhere else, a battering of wings. "Here," Dr. Schaubhut said, picking up "Kent's Final General Repertory," the homeopath's Bible. "See, fear of being alone. Silver nitrate is good for that. Homesickness for animals that are boarded a long time: ignatia. Hysteria in Chihuahuas: nitric acid. Loquacity in Siamese cats—you know, *rrranr:* hyoscyamus. Or sometimes lachesis—that's venom from the bushmaster." He moved on to physical diseases. "Uranium nitrate for diabetic birds. Crataegus for ferrets. I see a lot of ferrets with heart disease, and the remedy is crataegus, from the hawthorn berry." He closed the volume. "This isn't magic," he said. "Not every animal gets better. But the method itself is beautiful and precise."



"This line represents my expectations."

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CORRECTIONS

JANUARY 14

BECAUSE of an editing error, an article in Friday's theatre section transposed the identifications of two people involved in the production of "Waiting for Bruce," a farce now in rehearsal at the Rivoli. Ralph W. Murtaugh, Jr., a New York attorney, is one of the play's financial backers. Hilary Murtaugh plays the ingénue. The two Murtaughs are not related. At no time during the rehearsal visited by the reporter did Mr. Murtaugh "sashay across the stage."

MARCH 25

BECAUSE of some problems in transmission, there were several errors in yesterday's account of a symposium held by the Women's Civic Forum of Rye on the role played by slovenliness in cases of domestic violence. The moderator of the symposium, Laura Murtaugh, is not "a divorced mother of eight." Mrs. Murtaugh, the president of the board of directors of the Women's Civic Forum, is married to Ralph W. Murtaugh, Jr., an attorney who practices in Manhattan. The phrase "he was raised with the hogs and he lived like a hog" was read by Mrs. Murtaugh from the trial testimony of an Ohio woman whose defense against a charge of assault was based on her husband's alleged slovenliness. It did not refer to Mrs. Murtaugh's own husband. Mr. Murtaugh was raised in New York.

APRIL 4

AN article in yesterday's edition on the growing contention between lawyers and their clients should not have used an anonymous quotation referring to the firm of Newton, Murtaugh & Clayton as "ambulance-chasing jackals" without offering the firm an opportunity to reply. Also, the number of hours customarily billed by Newton, Murtaugh partners was shown incorrectly on a chart accompanying the article. According to a spokesman for the firm, the partner who said he bills clients for "thirty-five or forty hours on a good day" was speaking ironically. There are only twenty-four hours in a day. The same article was in error as to the first name and the background of one of the firm's senior partners. The correct name is Ralph W. Murtaugh, Jr. There is no one named Hilary Murtaugh connected with the firm. Ralph W. Murtaugh, Jr., has at no time played an ingénue on Broadway.

APRIL 29

BECAUSE of a computer error, the early editions on Wednesday misidentified the person arrested for a series of armed robberies of kitchen-supply stores on the West Side of Manhattan. The person arrested under suspicion of being the so-called "pesto bandit" was Raymond Cullom, twenty-two, of Queens. Ralph W. Murtaugh III, nineteen, of Rye, should have been identified as the runner-up in the annual Squash for Kids charity squash tournament, in Rye, rather than as the alleged robber.

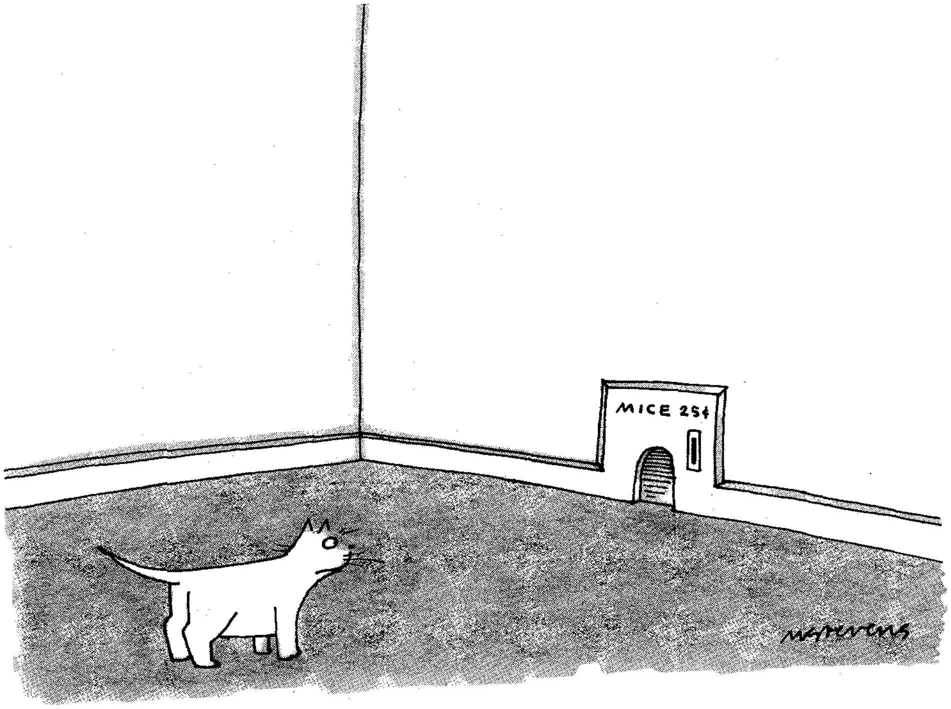
MAY 18

BECAUSE of an error in transmission, a four-bedroom brick colonial house on Weeping Bend Lane, in Rye, owned by Mr. and Mrs. Ralph W. Murtaugh, Jr., was incorrectly listed in Sunday's real-estate section as being on the market for $17,500. The house is not for sale. Also, contrary to the information in the listing, it does not have flocked wallpaper or a round bed.

JUNE 21

IN Sunday's edition, the account of a wedding that took place the previous day at St. John's Church in Rye was incorrect in a number of respects. The cause of the errors was the participation of the reporter in the reception. This is in itself against the policy of this newspaper, and should not have occurred. Jane Murtaugh was misidentified in two mentions. She was neither the mother of the bride nor the father of the bride. She was the bride. It was she who was wearing a white silk gown trimmed in tulle. The minister was wearing conventional ministerial robes. Miss Murtaugh should not have been identified on second mention as Mrs. Perkins, since she will retain her name and since Mr. Perkins was not in fact the groom. The number of bridesmaids was incorrectly reported. There were eight bridesmaids, not thirty-eight. Their dresses were blue, not glued. The bridegroom's name is not Franklin Marshall. His name is Emory Barnswell, and he graduated from Franklin and Marshall College. Mr. Barnswell never attended Emory University, which in any case does not offer a degree in furniture stripping. Mr. Barnswell's ancestor was not a signer of the Declaration of Independence, and was not named Hector (Boom-Boom) Bondini. The name of the father of the bride was inadvertently dropped from the article. He is Hilary Murtaugh.

—CALVIN TRILLIN



THE WINTER BAZAAR

WHEN Bertha Knox died, Knox Farm was developed with "luxury" homes and renamed Norwell Estates. They were the first split-level houses in that part of Indiana, and for a while it was a big deal to visit someone in the Estates and see how the kitchen and living room and bedroom were all on different levels. All that remained of the farm was the house and a couple of acres of cornfields, which belonged to the Methodist Church. Bertha Knox had been a Presbyterian, but the Presbyterians had hired a woman minister, so Mrs. Knox left her house to the Methodists, after her lawyer told her she couldn't leave it to her dog, Mr. Jim.

A man from Gaitlinburg eventually bought the farmhouse and the fields fronting the Range Road from the Methodist Church. His plan was to get the zoning changed and open a Dairy Freeze, but when the selectmen proved uncoöperative he stopped paying his mortgage. The Norwell Valley Savings Bank (the only bank in town) was forced to foreclose on the property. The furnishings of the house had remained in Methodist ownership, and anything that wasn't "junk" was to be sold at the Winter Bazaar.

One morning in early October, Walter Doyle, who was the president of the Norwell Valley Savings Bank, stopped at the farmhouse on his way to Rotary lunch at McGooley's Tavern, over in Hempel. He only intended to have a quick look around, but something about the abandoned, sunlit rooms entranced him. He went upstairs. The bedrooms were tidy and poised, as if awaiting guests. He couldn't remember ever being in such a quiet, peaceful place, and the thought of lunch in the basement of McGooley's—the smoke, the sticky floor, the gelatinous beef stew—repulsed him. So he took a bath, a decadently long bath, in the large porcelain bathtub, and then he lay down on one of the beds in his boxer shorts and T-shirt.

When he woke up the sun had passed from the window. For a moment he didn't remember who or where he was. This feeling of disorientation was so rich and transporting he lay still and let it linger. But slowly it faded; his life filtered back into place, familiar and intact. He got dressed and went downstairs.

Mrs. Topsy Hatter, the chairman of the Winter Bazaar committee, was standing in the kitchen with a carving knife poised in front of her. When she saw it was Walter Doyle coming down the stairs, she said, "Jesus, Walter, you scared me."

"Sorry, Mrs. Hatter," Walter said.

"How long have you been here?" Topsy put the knife back in a drawer. She was wrapping glasses in yellowed newspaper. All the cabinet doors were open, arms reaching into the room. The kitchen table was crowded with stemware.

"I fell asleep upstairs," Walter said. "I stopped by to check things, and I fell asleep. I don't know what's wrong with me."

"You're probably just tired."

Walter didn't know Mrs. Hatter very well, but he had always been a little bit in love with her. He had babysat for her kids, Ellen and Knight, twenty-five years ago, when he was in high school. Mr. Hatter had died sometime after that. Mrs. Hatter had worked for the phone company, and brought up Ellen's two kids after Ellen fell apart, but they were pretty much grown up now. She still lived in her big old house out on Cobble Road. She was active in the town, but she didn't really fit in with the other ladies. There had always been something competent and independent about her, a way of dismissing things she found irrelevant, which frightened people. Topsy Hatter did things like wear pants and let her black, black hair hang long and loose, back when other women were wearing dresses and getting what they called hairdos at Joanie's every week. Walter was sure Mrs. Hatter had never set foot inside of Joanie's.

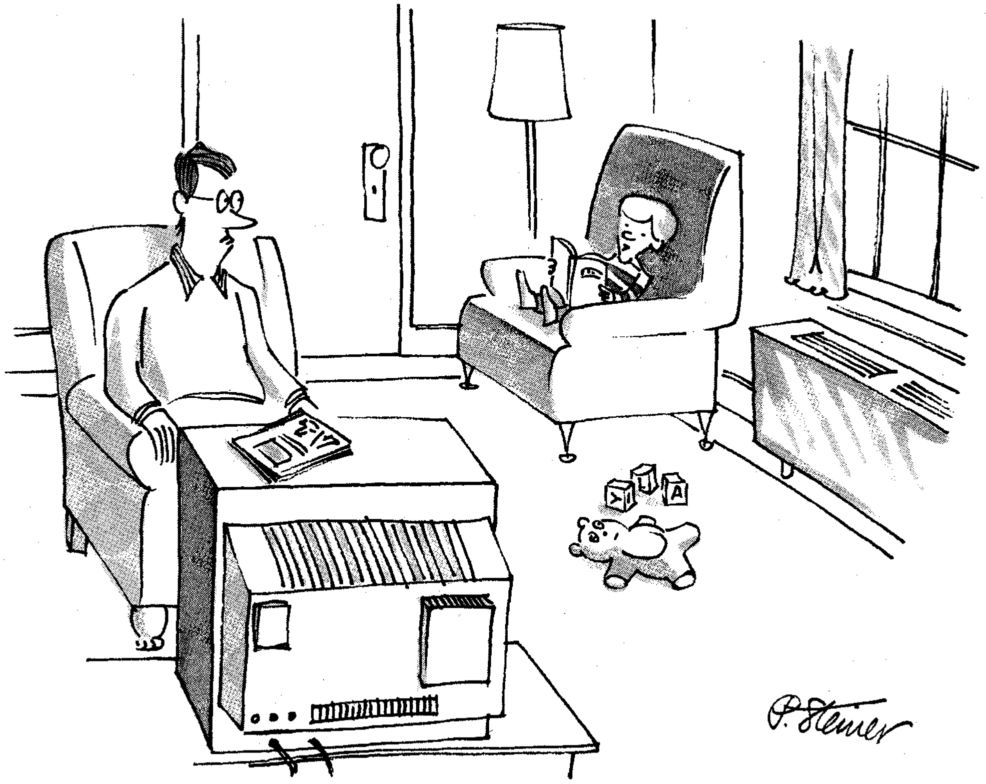
"Are you taking those for the bazaar?" he asked.

"Yes," she said. "You know, Bertha Knox had some nice things. It's kind of sad, her not having anyone to give them to. A stupid dog."

"Can I help?"

"Oh, no," said Topsy. "This is my job. Shouldn't you be at work?"

"They will survive without me." Walter sat down at the kitchen table. He picked up one of the glasses, got up, and filled it at the tap. The water was



"Dad, can you read?"

rusty, but he let it run till it turned clear. It tasted fresher and sweeter than the water at home. It must be well water, he thought.

"You're doing this all yourself?" He sat back down. "Don't you have any helpers?"

"No," said Topsy. "I like it, coming out here. It's nice and quiet. I'll let the ladies take care of the rest, but I like being out here alone."

"It doesn't scare you?"

Topsy laughed. "No," she said. "It doesn't scare me."

"I like being here, too," Walter said.

He watched her swaddle a glass. Her dark hair was gray now, but he couldn't tell how long, since it was in a bun. "You used to have such long hair," he said. "It was beautiful. Is it still?"

"It's still long," she said, "but I don't think it was ever beautiful."

"Can I see it?"

"No," she said.

"Why not?"

"Because."

He picked up a sheet of the newspaper. It was the Norwell *Bulletin*, ten years old. "Old news," he said.

"I found it in the basement. There are stacks and stacks of them."

"You went down in the basement?" That was where the bodies of Bertha Knox and Mr. Jim had been found.

"Apparently."

"You weren't scared?"

"Of what?"

"I don't know. Scared to go down there?"

"No," said Topsy. "I wasn't. I don't scare easy."

THE next day he was there when she arrived. She recognized his car beside the hedge and she thought about backing up and leaving, but she didn't. She parked beside it and went inside. He was packing the glasses she had wrapped into a cardboard box.

"What are you doing here?" she asked.

"I'm not here," he said. He smiled. "I'm in Gaitlinburg. I'm meeting with Mr. Angelo Carmichael in Gaitlinburg."

"Who's Angelo Carmichael?"

"The Dairy Freeze man. We're having lunch."

For a moment Topsy just stood there. She was trying to think things out, think of everything, be logical. But she had trouble concentrating. Walter stood up. He was a handsome man. He opened the refrigerator. From the back he was a large handsome man. The only thing in the fridge was a bottle of wine. He took it out and looked at it as if he were surprised to find it there.

"Would you like a glass of wine?" he asked. He held the bottle out to her, like a waiter in a restaurant, so that she could see the label. Only she couldn't see it; she had trouble seeing anything. She sat down.

"Some wine?" Walter asked.

"Don't you think it's a little early for wine?"

Walter looked disappointed. He shrugged. "I guess so," he said. "Maybe later."

"Maybe," Topsy said.

"Do you mind that I'm here?" he asked. He sat down beside her.

Topsy didn't answer.

"Do you want me to leave?"

"Maybe I will have a little wine," Topsy said. "Just a touch."

THE next day his car was there, and she turned around and drove home, but when she got there she realized she wanted to see him, so she drove back to the farmhouse. But his car was gone.

She didn't think he'd be there the next day, and she was right. She started to sort through the pots and pans. After about half an hour she heard a noise upstairs. It sounded like a bird. She stopped and listened, but she didn't hear anything.

"Walter?" she called.

The noise again: an owl.

She went upstairs and found Walter in the back bedroom, in bed, apparently naked. She stood in the doorway.

"What in God's name are you doing?" she asked.

"Waiting for you?"

"You're a married man, Walter," she said. "What would your wife think of you now?"

"I don't think Virginia is thinking of me now."

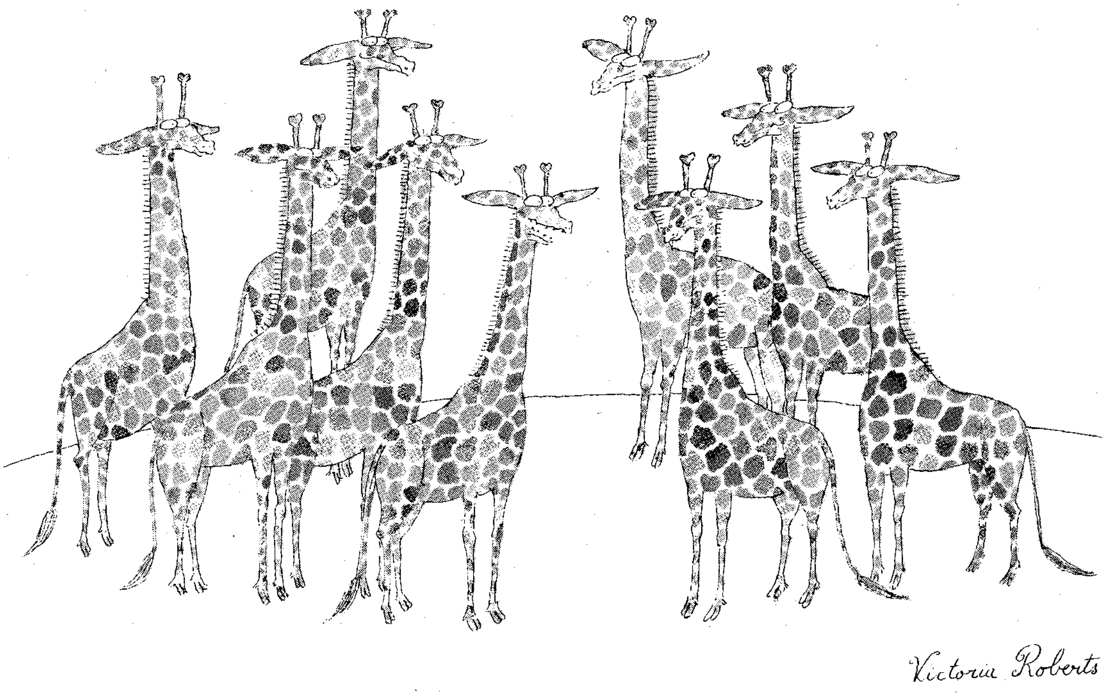
"What if she were?"

He looked down at the sheet sloped over his stomach and legs. "She'd think I looked silly," he said.

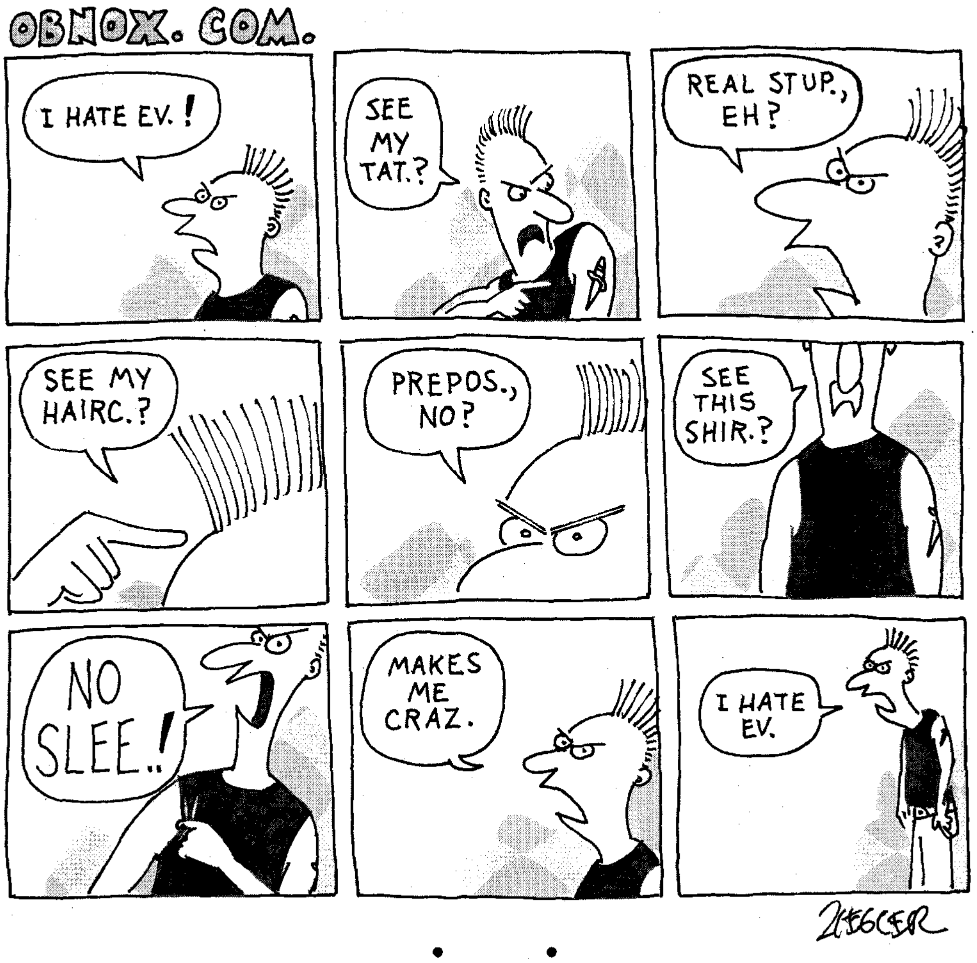
"She'd be right," Topsy said. She went downstairs.

In a little while he came down. She had spread the pots and pans all across the kitchen floor, and he stopped at the door, looking at the display.

"I'm sorry," he said. "I didn't mean to embarrass you."



"Same old crowd."


OBNOX.COM.
I HATE EV.!
SEE MY TAT.?
REAL STUP., EH?
SEE MY HAIRC.?
PREPOS., NO?
SEE THIS SHIR.?
NO SLEE.!
MAKES ME CRAZ.
I HATE EV.

"You didn't," said Topsy. "You embarrassed yourself."

"You think so?"

"Yes," said Topsy. "I do."

He picked his way through the maze of pots and sat at the table. "I've never been unfaithful," he said.

"Do you want a medal?"

"No," he said. "Just so you know. I mean, I'm not a Don Juan."

Topsy smiled. "I didn't think you were."

"Have you ever been unfaithful?"

"I'm not married," said Topsy.

"I mean when you were."

"It's none of your business," said Topsy.

"That means yes," said Walter. "What about since . . . well, since he died? Have you had . . . affairs?"

"I don't think one has affairs in Norwell."

"You'd be surprised."

"I'm sure I would."

Walter stood up. "Well, I guess I better go."

"I suppose so," said Topsy.

"I guess I shouldn't come back, either."

"It would probably be better."

"O.K.," said Walter. He put his topcoat on, picked up his keys. "Goodbye," he said.

Topsy nodded goodbye.

He got his car out of the garage and drove away. Topsy returned to the pots and pans, scrubbing their heat-stained copper bottoms, but after a while she went upstairs, up into the room. He had made the bed, but badly. Men can't make beds, Topsy thought. She started to remake it, and realized that the sheets were still warm from him. She put her hand, palm down, on the bottom sheet. She felt as if she were doing something dangerous. She was standing like that, touching the warm spot, when she heard a car in the driveway. She looked out the window and saw Walter come in the back door. He made owl noises. She stayed still knowing he would find her.

He did. She stood by the bed, and he stood in the doorway.

"I'm back," he said.

"I see," she said. "I was just . . . making the bed." But she wasn't making the bed. She was standing there, looking at him.

"Are you glad I came back?" he asked.

Topsy waited a moment. She couldn't speak, so she nodded yes.

"Good," he said. He came closer, touched her hair. "Well?" he said.

"Wait," said Topsy. "There have got to be rules."

He took his hand away. "Of course," he said. "Rules. What rules? Tell me."

Topsy tried to think of rules. What would good rules be? "Well," she began. "We can stop whenever we want. Either of us. We can just say 'Stop,' and it will be over."

"O.K.," said Walter. "Sure."

"And we both have to remember that you're married. That that comes first. That I don't want you to leave your wife. Is that understood?"

Walter nodded.

"And this is between us. Just us. This is private."

"Of course," said Walter. He sat on the bed. "Sit down," he said.

"Wait," said Topsy. "I'm still thinking." For a moment neither of them said anything. "I guess that's all," said Topsy. "Can you think of anything else?"

Walter shook his head. "I can't think of anything," he said.

THEY never made plans. They never called one another. They'd just go, and if the other person showed—well, then. Whoever got there first turned on the electric space heater and waited. If it was Topsy waiting, she continued her bazaar work: cleaning out closets, washing sheets, rummaging in the bookshelves.

They made love and ate sandwiches and drank coffee or wine and talked. As it got colder, they spent more time in bed and less in the kitchen. They listened to squirrels in the attic. They made love.

Walter often fell asleep, and if he did, it was Topsy's responsibility to wake him at three o'clock. One afternoon she was lying in bed between warmth from the space heater and warmth from Walter. She had her eyes closed and was making an effort to stay awake, although she wanted very much to sleep simultaneously with Wal-

THE MAP

I

A scarlet horseman
gallops across the steppes.
His sabre reaches to
the baffled sun,
which waits for him, spread over
a bay bathed in
a tepid silence.

II

Weapons buried in
the thickest part
of the forest
mark the source of a great river.
A wounded warrior
points out the spot, insistently.
His hand stretches to
the desert
and his feet are resting on
an elegant city
with white, sunlit squares.

III

The Great Chief offers
the pipe of peace
to a buffalo hunter
whose distracted gaze falls on
the colored tents
and the acrid smoke from the bonfires.
A crow flaps close on wings of woe.

IV

Fruits with an unpleasant
metallic taste are signs of
the Doleful Islands.
A ship is gently sinking
and the sailors are pulling
for a beach where a wild boar
is burying its prey. The sand
is blinding to the gods.

V

Cold air passes over
the hard shells
of the crustaceans.
A great shriek splits
the sky with its frozen
lightning flash of rage.
Like a gray carpet, they
descend, night and terror.

VI

The runaway carriage bolts
and a woman screams for help,
her clothing in disorder,
her hair loose in the wind.
The driver downs a huge
flagon of cider,
leaning unconcerned against
a marble torso.
Hedgehogs mark the road
with their long
nocturnal spines.

VII

A seaplane flies
over the jungle. There below
the missionaries wave
as they prepare for the wedding
of the chief. A whiff of cinnamon
spreads through the atmosphere
and on, to lose itself in
the fading drone of the plane.

VIII

A city walled in with vast stones
conceals the stiffened corpse of the queen
and the sweet, decaying flesh of her last
folly, an ice-cream seller,
his hair combed like a schoolgirl's.

IX

Venus emerges from the skimpy
crest of a palm.
In her right hand she holds
the fruit of a banana
with the peeled skin hanging down
like a soft, golden canopy.
Summer arrives
and a fisherman exchanges
a pound of clams
for a fencing mask.

—ALVARO MUTIS

(Translated, from the Spanish, by Alastair Reid.)

• •

ter. She could feel him dreaming, his big body pressed against her, his mouth wet at the back of her neck, and she felt that if she slipped into sleep she would find herself in his dream: something about a beach, hot sand, hot sun, water and sky, and birds clamoring in trees. After a while she felt the pressure of his body relax, and she knew he was awake.

"Did you have a good sleep?" she asked.

He answered by pulling her closer. She could feel sweat along her back where his stomach had rested, sweat their bodies had created together. She leaned out of the bed and turned down the space heater. She watched its coils fade from orange to red, heard its *ping ping ping*, and felt a sudden tremor of happiness, of the world stretching out all around her, curved and occurring.

"I'm all hot," she said.

He wasn't talking yet. She tried to turn toward him but he pressed himself harder against her. He wrapped his arms around her, and moved against her, slowly.

"I'm sweating," she said.

He kissed her back, and licked her spine. His tongue felt cool. She tried again to turn, and this time he let her. The blankets slipped away from her and he tried to cover her again, but she said, "No. I'm hot."

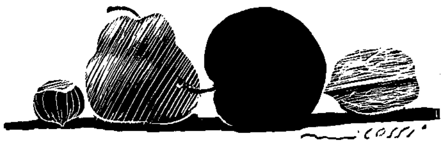
Even the windows were sweating. Topsy got out of bed and opened one. She turned the heater off. She stood looking out, feeling the cold air on her face. She watched the cornstalks in the field rearrange themselves as something—a dog?—walked through them. Darkness was spilling into the sky from some rip near the horizon.

"Come back to bed," Walter said.

"It's late," she said. "You should go."

"Come back," he said. "I have time."

"Where are you today?" she asked.



"What's your excuse for not being at work?"

"You," he said. "Come here. Please."

"Is that what you told Gladys?" Gladys was Walter's secretary.

"Yes," said Walter. "And I told Virginia I wouldn't be home for dinner because I'd be in bed with you."

"What did Virginia say?"

Walter didn't answer. Topsy turned away from the window. He was looking at the ceiling. "What would Virginia think of that?" she asked.

"She wouldn't like it," he said. He looked at her. "Virginia . . . loves me."

"Do you love her?"

"In a way," he said. "In our way, yes."

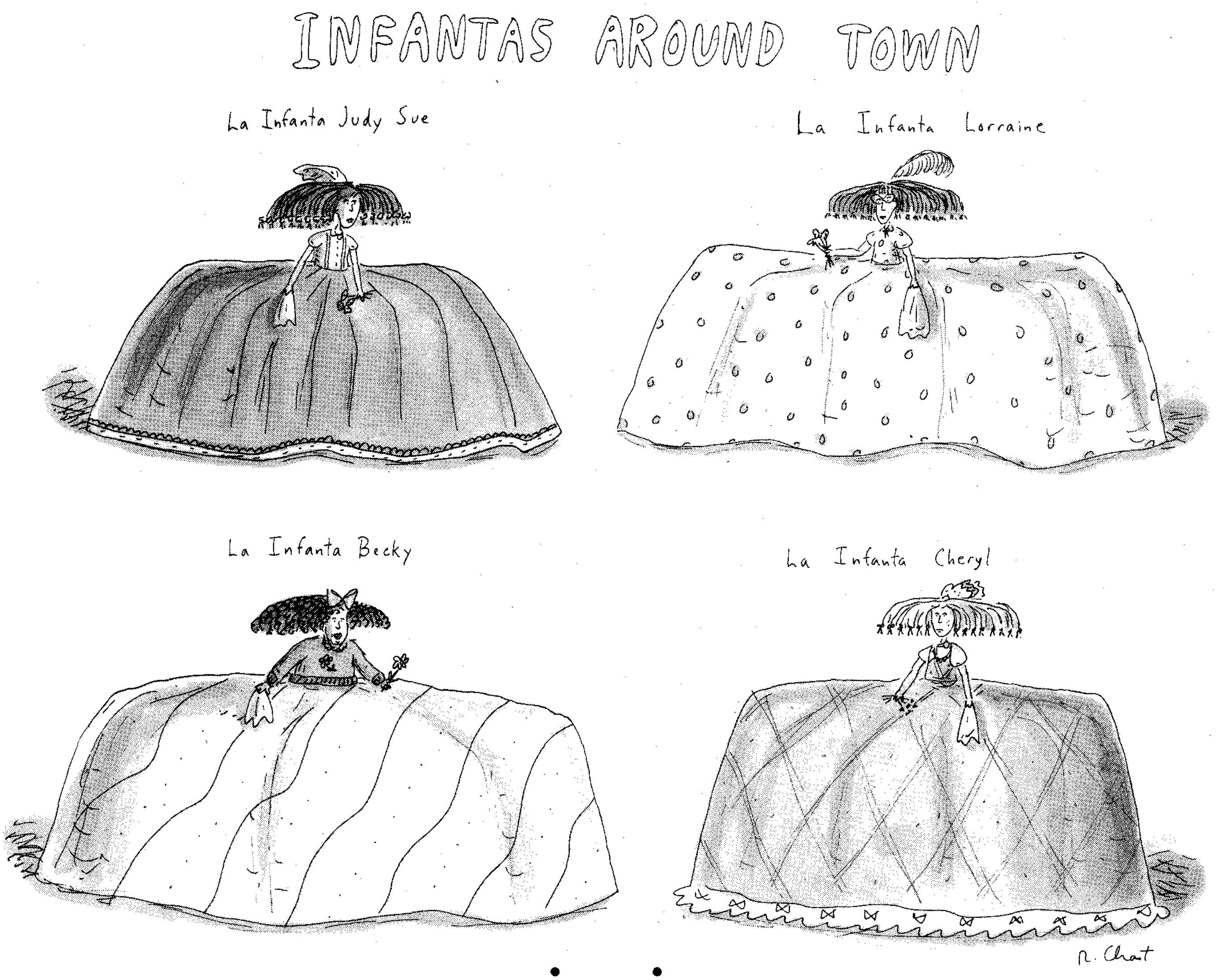
"What way is that?"

"It's hard to describe," he said.

She came and sat on the bed.

"I'm cold," he said.

She got up and closed the window. The thing *was* a dog—she saw it emerge from the corn and run through



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the trees toward Norwell Estates. Someone was calling it. Dinnertime.

"Did you love . . . what was his name?" Walter asked.

"Who?"

"Your husband."

"Ellery," she said. "For a while, yes. And then no."

"Did you hate him?"

"No," she said.

"That's good," he said. "Sometimes I think Virginia hates me."

"Sometimes she probably does."

"I never hate her. I feel sorry for her, but I don't hate her."

"Why do you feel sorry for her?"

Walter thought for a moment. "Because," he said. "It's a little pathetic. I mean all her good deeds. The Foodmobile and the Morning Doves—"

"What are the Morning Doves?"

"They call up senior citizens every morning to make sure they didn't die overnight. Because of what happened with Bertha Knox." Bertha Knox had been dead for quite a while when the gasman found her in the basement.

"What's pathetic about good deeds?"

"Nothing. I mean, I think it's great how much she does. I'm very proud of her."

"But you said it was pathetic."

"Oh, forget it," said Walter. "I don't want to talk about it."

Topsy came back and sat on the bed. "Sometimes I forget I was married. Isn't that terrible?"

"What do you mean, forget?"

"I just forget. I forget all about Ellery. Like it never happened. It's very important when it's happening, but when it's over it's surprising how little . . . effect it has."

"Did you like being married?"

"Of course. I mean, it was nice, raising a family."

"That would be nice," said Walter.

"Why don't . . . you and Virginia?"

"We've tried," said Walter. "It's very difficult. Both times Virginia got pregnant she miscarried. And I guess we feel a little too old for it now."

"How old are you?"

"Forty-two," said Walter. "Virginia is thirty-eight."

"That's not too old," said Topsy. "I was forty-two when I got Kittery and Dominick."

"But you didn't give birth to them," said Walter.

"No," said Topsy. "Ellen did that." They were quiet a moment, and then Topsy stood up and turned on the light.

"Turn it off," Walter said. "Lie down with me."

"No," said Topsy. "It's time to go home."

"Come lie down. For just a little while. I'm sad."

Topsy turned off the light. In the wake of illumination the room seemed darker than it had before. "Why are you sad?" she asked.

Walter thought for a moment. "I don't know," he said.

TINY PETERSON, the junkman, brought his truck and moved everything Topsy had deemed sellable to the Sunnipee Hall. Then he came back and took away what was left: that was the junk. There had been a lot of it, and Topsy knew there was no reason to save it for the rummage sale in May. She had learned from experience that there are some things no one will buy, things in this world—often fine things—that are superfluous. That make the mistake of becoming unowned.

A few nights later she and Walter had dinner together in the emptied farmhouse. Virginia was visiting her niece in Dayton. In the darkness of the kitchen everything was black and white except for the red sheen of wine in the glasses on the table.

"This was a bad idea," Topsy said. "I've been meaning to tell you something."

"What?"

"Well, I feel funny about coming here now," Topsy said. She picked up a wineglass and looked at it. "Now that there's no work to do."

"There's still work to do," Walter said. "Our private work."

"No," said Topsy. "I don't feel right about it anymore."

"You mean, it's all right to have an affair if it's accompanied by church work and not O.K. if it's not?"

"No," said Topsy. "I just mean being here."

"But this is the perfect place. You know it is."

"Well, we can't come here forever. Eventually someone will buy it, won't they?"

"Not if I can help it," said Walter.

"Well, I didn't really mean the place, anyway," Topsy said.

"What did you mean?" Walter stood up. He took the glass of wine from her and drank from it.

"I meant . . . us. I think we should think about ending it."

"Why?"

"What do you think? What do you think about ending it?"

"I don't want to end it," said Walter. He leaned against the sink. "Do you?"

"I think it might be a good idea."

"Why?"

"Well, because. Because I'm starting to depend on it. I'm starting to depend on you."

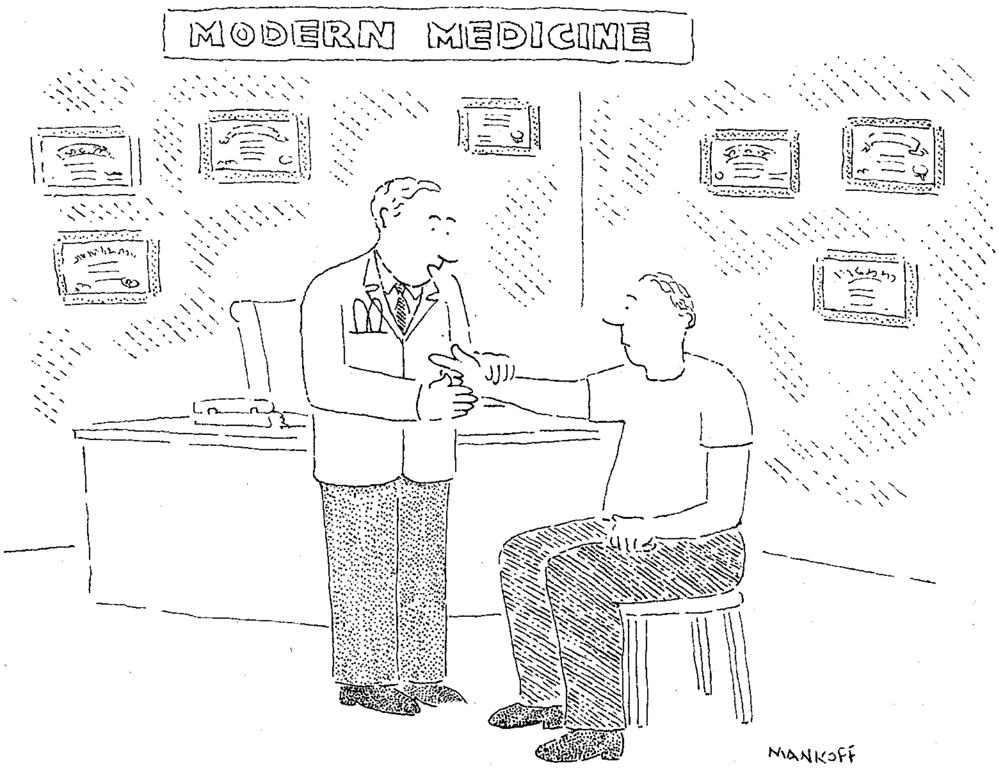
"What's wrong with that?"

"I don't like it. It's not what I wanted. I didn't want to get attached."

"Are you?"

Topsy looked across the kitchen at him. He was just a dark figure in the shadows, but she could picture him. "I think I am," she said.

"So am I," he said.



"Well, Bob, it looks like a paper cut, but just to be sure let's do lots of tests."

"Then we should stop," she said. "Remember the rule?"

"What rule?"

"That you're married. That we wouldn't . . . get fond of each other."

"But we were always fond of each other. Right from the start. At least, I was of you." He drank the rest of the wine and put the glass in the sink, came over and sat next to her. "Why can't we just keep going and see what happens?"

"No," she said. "It will only get worse."

"So let it get worse."

"I don't want it to get worse," Topsy said. "I want to end it now."

He stood up. "I thought you weren't scared. You told me you weren't easily scared."

Topsy shrugged. "I guess I was wrong," she said.

TWO weeks later, Topsy stood behind the cashier's table at the Winter Bazaar and watched Walter Doyle walk up and down the aisles. He arrived at the cashier's with a tackle box full of lures and weights.

"Those are twenty-five cents apiece," Topsy said.

"Do I get a discount if I buy them all?"

"I guess so," said Topsy.

"How about five dollars?"

"You want the box, too?"

"Of course," said Walter.

"Five dollars for the contents, and five dollars for the box. Ten for it all."

"This box isn't worth five dollars," said Walter. "Not even brand-new."

"Eight dollars, then," Topsy said. "For everything."

"O.K.," said Walter. He gave her a ten-dollar bill.

"Do you want your change? Any amount over your purchase price is a tax-deductible contribution."

"I'll take my change," said Walter.

Topsy gave him two tired dollar bills.

"You've got quite a crowd," he said. "How's it going?"

"We need buyers."

"Virginia's coming this afternoon. She's a buyer. Is that coffee free?"

"A nickel."

"What about a free cup for purchases eight dollars and over?"

"It's a nickel, Walter."

Walter extracted a dime from his pants pocket. "Keep the change," he said. "That's tax-deductible, right?"

Topsy poured him a cup of coffee.

"Are cream and sugar extra?" he asked.

"Help yourself," said Topsy.

Walter drank his coffee and watched Topsy fill a tray of paper cups with juice. She arranged all the cups with their edges touching, and then poured the juice down the rows in one long swoop, filling each cup perfectly, spilling none.

"Looks like you've done that before," Walter said.

"Just one of my many talents," said Topsy.

"Do you have a lost-and-found?" asked Walter.

"What did you lose?"

"A . . . glove."

"There's a box in the kitchen," Topsy said. "But I haven't seen any men's gloves."

"Could we look?"

"It's in the kitchen. Go ahead."

"Come with me."

"I have to stay here."

"You could get someone to cover for you, couldn't you?"

"I don't see the point. I'm sure you can find your own glove. If you did, indeed, lose it."

" 'Indeed'?"

"What?"

"Since when do you say, 'did, indeed'?"

Topsy shrugged. She drank a glass of juice. "Since now," she said.

"As a matter of fact, I didn't, indeed, lose a glove."

"I thought not."

"You thought not?"

"Stop it, Walter."

"Well, why are you talking like that?"

"Like what?"

"Like . . . you don't like me."

"I'm not. I don't."

"Don't what?"

"Don't not like you."

"I don't not like you, either."

A child interrupted them by buying a deflated beach ball and a transistor radio shaped like a frog.

"I miss you," said Walter, when the transaction had been completed. "Do you miss me?"

"I try not to," said Topsy.

"But you do?"

"A little."

"How much?"

"I told you: a little."

"Don't lie."

"I'm not lying. I don't lie."

Walter felt like saying, yeah, you don't get scared, either, but he didn't. Instead, he said, "Are you sure?"

"Walter, stop it. Please. I'm not going to discuss this in the church hall."

"Will you discuss it somewhere else?"

"No. It's pointless."

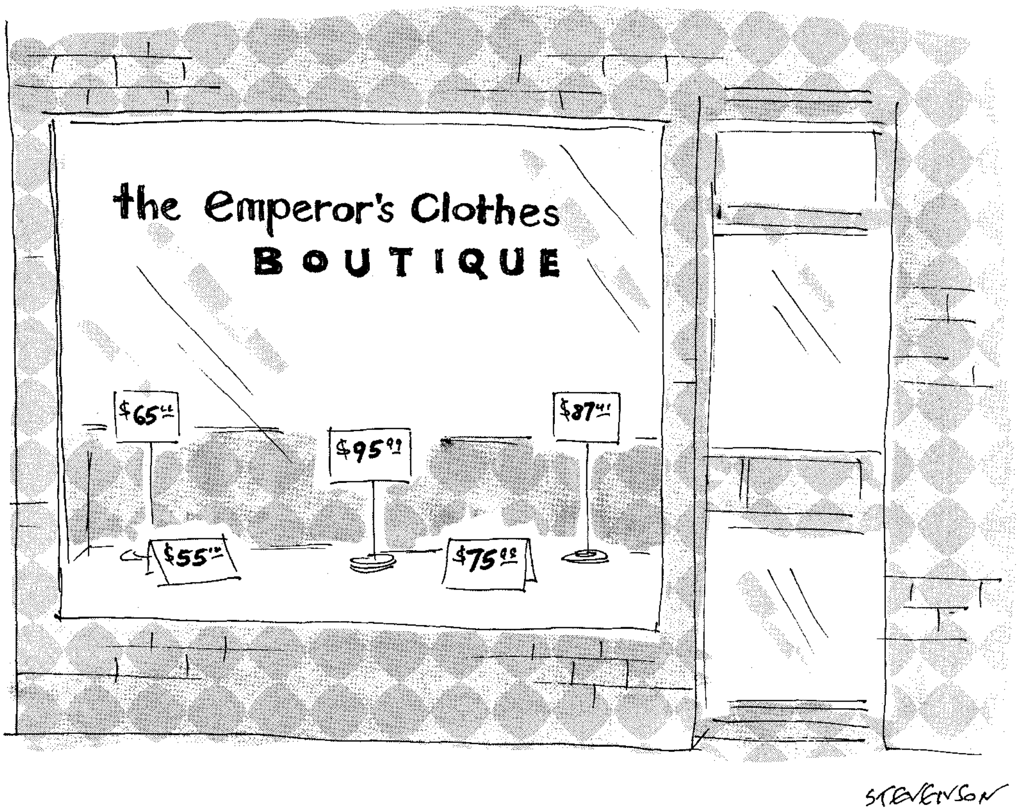
Walter threw his half-empty coffee cup into the garbage can. He picked up his tackle box. "Here," he said. "I don't really want this." He put the box down on the table.

"Take it," said Topsy. "You paid for it."

"I don't want it. I don't fish."

"Well, then, let me give you your money back." She took eight dollars out of the box and held them out, but Walter was walking toward the door. She looked at the money in her hand, then put it back in the cashbox.

When Virginia Doyle came in later that afternoon, Topsy deducted eight dollars from her grand total. When Virginia asked why, Topsy said they were just giving discounts to good customers. Virginia looked at her as if she were crazy. She told her that was no way to run a church bazaar.



FOR a while after Topsy stopped seeing Walter, she avoided driving past Knox Farm. If she was going over to Hempel she took the long way, out to the end of Cobble Road and back around through Gaitlinburg. But one day—the first day it was warm enough to drive with the windows open—she found that she had forgotten to take the long way; that she was on the Range Road, and the next thing she knew she was driving up the dirt road to the farmhouse. For a few minutes she just sat in the car, not knowing what she wanted to do. She had tried to park out of sight, and when she opened the windows wider an overgrown arm of forsythia unfurled into the car. The thin stalk was speckled with wartlike, pale-green buds; it bobbed in front of her face. She opened her mouth and set her lips to it. She bit a little so that she could taste its bitterness. She closed her eyes. She thought about her life and how things happened in it, how you couldn't stop things from happening or control them. It was as if you and all the things that could possibly happen in your life were floating in a pool the size of an ocean and you only touched some of them, and it was all accidental, and the things you wanted were as slim and slippery as fish. Fish swam between your fingers and legs and brushed against your sides; silver-sided fish nibbled at your toes; shy, skittish fish flitted to the surface and then flipped away, no matter how still you stood, no matter how quiet you were, for they could sense your desire: it pulsed from you like sonar—*come to me*, *come to me*, *come to me*—driving the swarms of swimming things far away.

IN early summer, when the days were like balm, Topsy drove to the Norwell Valley Savings Bank and climbed the stairs to Walter's office. Gladys Wallace was feeding a pencil to an electric sharpener.

"Hello, Gladys," Topsy said.

"Well, hi, Mrs. Hatter. What can we do for you?"

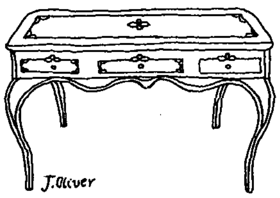
"Is Walter in?"

"Mr. Doyle? He's in a meeting at the moment. Did you have an appointment?"

"No, I don't. But maybe you could tell Walter—Mr. Doyle—that I'm here. He told me to stop by anytime."

"O.K., I'll let him know. Will you excuse me?"

"I sure will," said Topsy. She sat in an easy chair and picked up a copy of *Colonial Homes*.



Gladys reappeared shortly, closing the door behind her as if she had just got a baby down inside. "He says he'll see you now," she said. "You can go right in."

"Thanks," said Topsy. She went into Walter's office and closed the door, a little less quietly than Gladys had. "Hello, Walter," she said.

Walter nodded. He looked a little stunned.

"They climb out the window?" Topsy asked.

"Who?" asked Walter.

"The folks you were meeting with. Gladys told me you were in a meeting."

"I wasn't," said Walter.

"I guessed not," said Topsy.

"I'm in a meeting sometimes," said Walter.

"I'm sure you are," said Topsy. She sat down. For a moment neither of them said anything. They heard Gladys resume her pencil sharpening. "Don't you want to know why I'm here?" Topsy asked.

"I was wondering," said Walter. "Although it's nice to see you."

Topsy snorted. "I'm here on business," she said. "I want to buy Knox Farm. I'm going to sell my house."

"Why?" asked Walter.

"Why what?"

"Why are you going to sell your house?"

"It's too big."

"Knox Farm isn't small."

Topsy smiled. "This is business, Walter," she said. "I just want to buy a house your bank happens to own."

"Well, how much are you offering?"

"I'd like to see it," said Topsy.

"I thought you had."

"I'd like to see it again. Before I make an offer."

"Oh," said Walter. "I guess that seems fair."

"Maybe you'd drive out there with me? Show it to me?"

They looked at each other for a moment. Then Walter stood up and put on his jacket. "Certainly," he said. "I don't see why not."

WALTER opened the back door with a key that was hidden in the milk box. They went into the kitchen. The only thing in it was sunlight.

"This is the kitchen," Walter said. He turned on the faucet; rusty water flowed into the sink. "Running water," he announced.

"Stop it," said Topsy.

Walter turned off the water and shrugged. "What do you want?" he asked. "What are we doing here?"

"I just wanted to talk to you," Topsy said.

"Oh," said Walter.

"I'm lonely," said Topsy.

Walter didn't respond. He didn't want to look at her, so he opened a silverware drawer, looked in at its emptiness.

"I can't stand . . . being lonely like this," he heard her say. "I mean, I was lonely before you, but I never realized. It wasn't till we were together—well, after, when we stopped—that I realized . . . "

Inside the drawer an ant walked across a field of green felt. It climbed over a cork and paused at the summit. Walter decided to pretend he hadn't heard what Topsy had said. Once decided, it was easy.

After a moment, he said, "Did you really want to buy the house?"

"No," said Topsy. "Well, maybe for a minute. It was just an idea. A dumb idea."

"It's not a bad house," Walter said. He closed the drawer and wiped his hands together. He stood up straighter. "Well, then," he said. "I guess we should be going." He jiggled his car keys.

Topsy didn't move. "You go," she said. "It's O.K. I want to stay for a while."

"How will you get home?"

"I'll walk. Go."

He looked around the kitchen as if instructions on how to act might be displayed somewhere, like a choking poster. "I'm sorry," he said. "It's not that I don't want to stay . . . "

"I didn't expect you to stay. I don't know what I thought. Please, go."

"No. I mean, I still feel the—I still feel for you. I do. It's just that, well, things are better with Virginia. We've worked some things out. I mean, we're trying. And I don't think I should—"

"It's all right." She looked up at him and smiled. "That's good for you. I'm happy."

Walter studied his keys as if they were unfamiliar to him. "Are you sure you don't want a ride?"

"It's a nice day to walk," she said.

"O.K., then," he said. He moved toward her, as if he might embrace her, but then walked around her, out the door. She waited till his car had pulled away, till the sound of it was gone, before she moved. She went upstairs and walked through the rooms, looked out the bedroom window. The same cornstalks were still standing patiently in the field. She didn't feel particularly sad. She felt numb.

Eventually she went back downstairs. Walter had left the key in the door. She thought about taking it as a souvenir, but then she realized she didn't want one. She locked the door and tossed the key into the milk box, kicked the lid shut with her foot, and started walking home.

—PETER CAMERON

ANNALS OF POLITICS

THE JOHNSON YEARS: THE OLD AND THE NEW

IV—THE STEALING

PRECINCT
13

Courtesy of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

ON the evening of Saturday, August 28, 1948—the day of the second, runoff, primary for the Democratic nomination for United States senator (a nomination tantamount to election in one-party Texas)—Lyndon Johnson trailed former Governor Coke Stevenson, who had defeated him soundly in the first primary, by more than twenty thousand votes. The still unreported returns from San Antonio, where Stevenson had defeated Johnson two to one in the first primary, were expected to add substantially to Stevenson's lead. Johnson had gambled his entire political career on this election. To run in it, he had had to sacrifice the congressional seat he had held for more than a decade, but he had felt he had no choice: his career had been stalled for years; he could not bear to remain in Washington without power; and there seemed no feasible possibility of obtaining power in the House of Representatives. This race would, he said, be his last chance; if he lost it, he told friends, he would leave politics forever. Running against the popular former Governor had been a desperate gamble, but Johnson had felt he had no choice but to take that gamble. Now, on that Primary Day evening, it seemed that he had lost it.

Inextricably tied to Johnson's fortunes, however, were the fortunes of a coterie of men which included Herman and George Brown, of Brown & Root, the contracting firm that had bankrolled and benefitted from Johnson's political career. The Browns were well aware of how high the stakes had risen for them, too, for the savagery of Johnson's attacks on the highly respected Stevenson had so deeply divided the Texas political establishment that even the state road-building contracts that Brown & Root had been receiving for decades might be endangered. The bitterness of this campaign—and the toughness of their opponent—would, George Brown recalled many years later, preclude the normal post-campaign "reconciliation." In that second primary, he said, "It was all on the line." One of the Browns' attorneys, Edward A. Clark, of Austin, who had been rapidly rising toward great political power in Texas, says, "If I lost, I was going to be through. I was going to be out." And, as for his clients, "the Browns had to win this. They *had* to win this. Stevenson . . . would have run them out of Washington. Johnson—if he lost, he was going back to being nobody. *They* were going back to being nobody. That [second primary] —that was when the chips were down. . . . That was *it!* All or nothing."

At Johnson's direction, the Browns and other key supporters had poured unprecedented amounts of money into San Antonio's "West Side," a vast Mexican-American slum, and into the organization of San Antonio Sheriff Owen Kilday, which would run the West Side on Primary Day. ("They were paid handsomely," says John B. Connally, who was then a campaign aide. "It takes a hell of a lot of money for an organization like that.") And Johnson's supporters had poured money into the area south of San Antonio known as "the Valley" in Texas political parlance of the era—Duval County and eleven other counties along and stretching north from the Rio Grande River that were controlled by a group of *patrones*, or local dictators, headed by George B. Parr, the notorious "Duke of Duval." When the figures from San Antonio finally came in that evening, they provided political observers with quite a shock. Stevenson, a great favorite among Mexican-Americans, because he had championed their causes during his governorship, may have defeated Johnson two to one in San Antonio in the first primary, but he hadn't beaten him two to one this time. He hadn't beaten him at all. Ten thousand Johnson votes had been produced in the West Side slum—and Johnson had beaten *him.*

And when, even later that evening, with Stevenson still leading by seventeen thousand votes, the Valley was heard from, that lead narrowed with every report. Webb County, where the shadowy figure of Parr's ally Judge Manuel Raymond, of Laredo, ruled (Johnson's envoy to Raymond recalls, "Judge Raymond controlled the situation there just like I could take a piece of paper and write my name. . . . You just had to . . . tell him what was needed"), reported 5,554 for Johnson, 1,179 for Stevenson—a vote of almost five to one (and a plurality of four thousand votes) for Johnson. Rural Valley counties—Zapata, Brooks, Jim

Hogg—checked in with overwhelming margins as well; and in the two counties in which Parr's rule was absolute, the figures reported were even more one-sided. In Starr County, it was 2,908 for Johnson, 166 for Stevenson. And in Duval, Parr's home county, it was 4,195 for Johnson, 38 for Stevenson—a vote of more than a hundred to one. Johnson came out of the Valley with a plurality of twenty-seven thousand votes, and by the time the Texas Election Bureau, an unofficial vote-tabulating body financed by newspapers and radio stations, closed for the night, at 1:30 A.M., despite further gains for Stevenson in other parts of the state, out of almost a million votes cast his lead was down to 854 votes.

The next day—Sunday, August 29th—brought a development that startled even experts on the notoriously corrupt politics of Texas, for, as Allen Duckworth, of the Dallas *News*, the state's most respected political reporter, wrote, while Duval County traditionally gave overwhelming votes to its favored candidate, "the county usually reports, practically complete, on Election Night"; otherwise, since few constraints limited Parr in the number of votes he reported, the effect of his turning in votes late would be that he could report almost any number of votes needed—which would mean that to a considerable extent the Duke of Duval could decide the result of any close statewide election all by himself. On Sunday, Duval County election officials announced that although George Parr's home county had given Johnson a 110-1 plurality, more than four thousand votes, that was not in fact the county's total vote, because, these officials said, it had just been discovered that the returns from one of Duval's precincts—or "boxes," as they were called—had not yet been counted. (The returns still hadn't been counted, the officials said, but they certainly hoped to have the figures by the end of the day.) The officials were as good as their word. At seven o'clock Sunday evening, twenty-four hours after the polls closed, upward revisions for Johnson came in from several Houston precincts (revisions in themselves so suspicious that there were immediate calls for an investigation). Suddenly, Stevenson was leading by a bare handful of votes. And at this crucial point Duval announced that it now had its returns ready. There had, election officials said, been 427 previously unreported votes in that "uncounted" precinct. Stevenson had received two of them; Johnson had received 425. With those 425 new votes added to Johnson's total, Stevenson, for the first time, was no longer ahead in what the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* called "the closest major race in the state's long political history."

On Monday, another new return arrived from the Valley—eighty new votes for Lyndon Johnson in Starr County. (Final returns from Starr were Johnson 3,038, Stevenson 170; combined with Duval's final vote of Johnson, 4,622, Stevenson, 40, Parr's two key counties alone provided Johnson with an edge of more than seven thousand votes: 7,660 to 210.) But that was the only new return from the Valley on Monday, and from the state as a whole there was the usual barrage of the transpositions and corrections inevitable when results were being hurriedly counted and reported over the telephone to frenzied Election Bureau headquarters. Stevenson received more benefits from these corrections than Johnson, and at the end of the day Stevenson led by 119 votes—494,396 to 494,277—in what Duckworth wrote was "the most exciting Senate race Texas has ever known."

Stevenson still led on Tuesday, August 31st, the third day after the primary. An Election Bureau clerk found that reports from Eastland County had inadvertently transposed the two candidates' totals, and correcting that mistake widened Stevenson's margin. At 7 P.M. Tuesday, the Election Bureau announced that it had "complete" returns—complete in the sense that all boxes had reported in all the state's two hundred and fifty-four counties except for one box in sparsely populated Borden County, where about forty votes were supposed to be still unreported (and except for two counties, Hansford and Kinney, which favored Stevenson but hadn't held primaries, because Stevenson's overconfident aides had not considered them necessary). Election Bureau director Bob Johnson told a reporter that "there was little doubt the Bureau's unofficial count would give Stevenson a majority." And, as the Houston *Chronicle* pointed out, "the Bureau, although it cannot actually elect an officeholder on the basis of its unofficial returns, has been consistently accurate during the thirty-two years of its existence. It has never missed naming the eventual winner." The blaring headlines—"STEVENSON LEADS BY 349 WITH ABOUT 40 VOTES OUT"—seemed to proclaim the end of Lyndon Johnson's dreams.

With the returns from each county now having been repeatedly checked and rechecked by both sides, no further major changes were expected, and, indeed, there were no significant changes on Wednesday, September 1st, the fourth day after the election, and Stevenson still led. He still led on Thursday, September 2nd, the fifth day after the election, and his margin—351 votes on Thursday night—was apparently solid. "STEVENSON HOLDS FINAL VOTE LEAD," a typical headline said.

YES

Now we are like that flat cone of sand
in the garden of the Silver Pavilion in Kyoto
designed to appear only in moonlight.

Do you want me to mourn?
Do you want me to wear black?

Or like moonlight on whitest sand
to use your dark, to gleam, to shimmer?

I gleam. I mourn.

—TESS GALLAGHER

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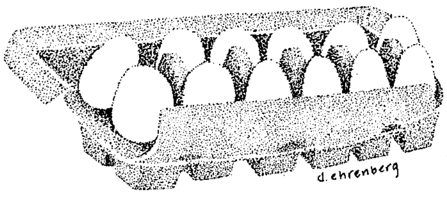


But on Friday, September 3rd, the sixth day after the election, the Valley was heard from again.

HARDLY had the Election Bureau opened, at nine o'clock, when corrections were reported from the Rio Grande: 43 new votes for Johnson from Dimmit County, 38 new votes for Johnson from Cameron County. In particular, George Parr was heard from. With Duval County poll taxes almost exhausted, that county's voting potential was all but used up, but his domain included other counties. One was Zapata, and on Friday morning Zapata produced 45 votes more for Johnson. Corrections came in from counties in other areas of the state that Friday morning, but all were small—none as big as those from the three Valley counties. At noon, the Valley's 126 new votes had played the major role in reducing Coke Stevenson's lead to 157 votes, 494,096 to 493,939.

PLATO AND SOCRATES
And another thing! Why does it always rain just when you've waxed philosophical?
It's Greek to me! Wacka-wacka-wacka!!
THE VAUDEVILLE YEARS

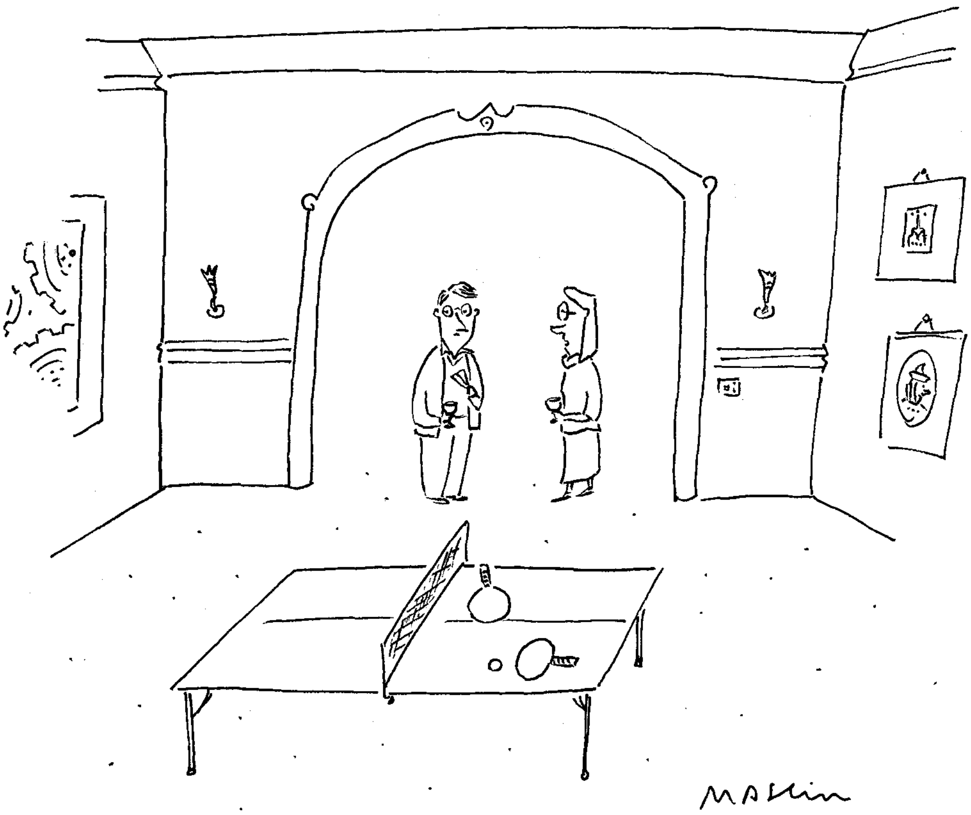
• •

Another county controlled by Parr was Jim Wells, where a reform party formed by returning Second World War veterans had forced him to exercise discretion on Election Day. The only precinct in that county that had been run as the Duke liked precincts run was Precinct 13, where the election judge was Luis (Indio) Salas, a burly deputy sheriff fiercely loyal to the Duke. The Precinct 13 vote reported by Salas on Election Night, 765 to 60 in Johnson's favor, had provided the bulk of Johnson's 1,788-to-769 lead in Jim Wells. Now, on Friday morning, the Democratic Executive Committee of Jim Wells County was meeting to make its final certification of the returns and report them to the state committee. In the county courthouse, one of the committee members, E. M. Brownlee, was unfolding the "tally sheets" and reading off the totals. The totals for the first twelve precincts were the same as those which had been reported on Election Night. Then Brownlee unfolded the tally sheet for Precinct 13. This total was not the same. The figure for Johnson, which had been reported as 765 on Election Night, was now 965—because since Election Night, according to testimony given later, someone had added a loop to the "7" to change it into a "9." Johnson had two hundred more votes.

At about 12:30 P.M. on Friday, with Stevenson's lead holding at 157 votes, Jim Wells County telephoned its amended return, including those two hundred additional Johnson votes, to the Election Bureau—and suddenly, with virtually all the counting in the election over, Coke Stevenson was no longer ahead. Lyndon Johnson was ahead. With so few counties still to be reported—and only minor remaining changes to be made—those two hundred votes from Precinct 13 were decisive. In the Election Bureau's final tabulations, Johnson had 494,191 votes, Stevenson 494,104. Out of 988,295 votes, Lyndon Johnson had won by 87—less than a hundredth of one per cent.

WHEN the two hundred new Johnson votes from Jim Wells Precinct 13 were reported, Stevenson exploded. "A concentrated effort is being made to count me out of this Senate race," he said in a press release. "On Thursday at noon"—when the Election Bureau was reporting that he, Stevenson, was 381 votes ahead, and after the Bureau's manager had said that there was little doubt that he had won—Johnson had "issued a 'victory' statement and urged his friends to 'do their duty.' Almost immediately, last-minute 'gains' for my opponent began to roll in from those counties of South Texas which are said to be dominated by a single man. I would like to know how my opponent knew so much in advance of the 'revisions' being made today."

Johnson's response came fast—too fast. No "revisions" had been made, he said in a written statement. The explanation for the changes from the South Texas counties was simply that incorrect figures had originally been re-



"As you may have guessed, Stu, I asked you over tonight for more than just a little wine and cheese."

• •

ported to the Election Bureau, and the correct figures had not been reported for some time. He had known the correct figures all along, he said. "The corrected votes in several of the counties which the Election Bureau has just used were reported to our headquarters Saturday night"—that is, on August 28th, the night of the election. He had, he said, known ever since Election Night that he had won.

This statement did not help his case; as the Dallas *News* commented, the Duval County election chairman had announced on Sunday morning, August 29th, that the ballots in Duval's last box—the box that turned out to contain 425 votes for Johnson and two for Stevenson—had not yet even been counted. How, then, could Johnson have known on Saturday night what the count would be? Two days after his written statement, Johnson made a ten-minute statewide radio broadcast. In the final moments before he went on the air, he sat hunched over the microphone, editing and reëditing the text. During the eight minutes he spoke (the last two minutes were reserved for his wife), he changed his earlier statement: now he said he had known the correct figures not since Saturday night but since Tuesday night, August 31st. Then, shifting from defense to offense, he said, "The hue and cry" about Duval County has taken "so many, many years to develop." Many of Texas' most renowned senators and governors had received Duval's overwhelming vote over the years; Coke Stevenson had—each of the previous four times Stevenson had run for office. And neither Stevenson nor anyone else had ever complained before. "My opponent has accepted that vote," he said. "The newspapers have complacently reported the vote from the county, year after year." If Stevenson had evidence that votes had been bought in Duval, "it was his duty to present it to a grand jury. . . . Lyndon Johnson did not buy anybody's vote." Furthermore, he said, "similar charges could be made about many counties which Stevenson had carried throughout the state."

This argument—that the Valley's vote for Lyndon Johnson was nothing more than the normal run of Texas politics—was always to be Johnson's contention, and it was to be stated and re-stated over the years by lower-level Johnson aides. Evaluating this contention is made difficult by the conditions of Texas election records for earlier decades—in the case of lopsided primary elections, the votes in some counties are not even on record, either because the counties didn't report them or because the state, with the conclusion already sealed, didn't record them. Sufficient records are available, however, for analysis of the previous fourteen senatorial and gubernatorial primary elections—every such election since 1932—and for those elections Johnson's contention is not correct.

In part, the differences between the 1948 election and earlier elections were differences only of timing and degree. Late amendments of returns were indeed, as Johnson said, common in Texas elections—but not this late. Johnson's 1941 race for the Senate, against W. Lee (Pass-the-Biscuits-Pappy) O'Daniel, in which the two candidates tried "to outsteal each other," had been marked by "corrected" returns, but the bulk of those returns for the Saturday election had been reported to the Election Bureau on Monday, mostly by county officials who excused even this much delay by claiming that no counting of returns had been done on the Sabbath; by late Monday, the election was in fact over, and the decisive votes were announced as soon as the Election Bureau opened on Tuesday morning. Even that degree of lateness had been considered shocking—and now, seven years later, the decisive votes had come in not on Monday or Tuesday but on Friday, six days after the election.

One-sidedness (noticeably heavy votes for one candidate or the other) was also common in late, "corrected" returns in Texas—but not this one-sided. The 1941 Senate race is typical. The corrections that gave Pappy O'Daniel the victory came from East Texas, and while the corrections shifted the trend in those counties, the shifts had at least a tinge of plausibility. There were no countywide totals for O'Daniel anywhere comparable to 4,622 to 40, the final margin that Duval gave Johnson in 1948.

And while these differences were only of timing and degree, there was a crucial third element that, when combined with the first two, made Lyndon Johnson's 1948 senatorial campaign

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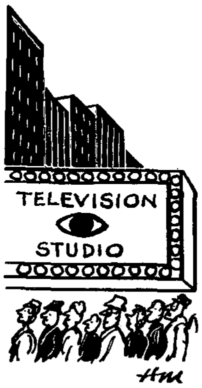
something new in Texas politics. This was the fact that the unusually, perhaps unprecedentedly, one-sided votes that were decisive in Johnson's victory were cast at the direction of a single man, a man who, moreover, could provide a candidate with additional votes simply by filling in new numbers on the printed tally sheets provided for a county's returns. This factor combined with the timing with which these votes were reported—at the last minute, after virtually all other votes had been recorded—to narrow the 1948 election, in its final, decisive stage, down to a single border boss waiting for a telephone call, and, when he received it, determining the outcome of an election by simply writing down whatever new numbers were required.



Johnson's contention that his vote from the Valley was nothing more than normal Texas politics ignores this crucial point. The reason there had been no "hue and cry" over the Duval County or South Texas vote for "many, many years" was that for many years that vote had not played a decisive—or even a significant—role in any senatorial or gubernatorial election. Coke Stevenson now declared that Johnson's statement was not true. "This is the first instance in recorded history that those bloc-voting counties have determined the result of a statewide election," he said. And, beyond that, "This is the first time that the manipulators of the voting in these counties were not content with all-out bloc voting, but reopened the boxes in secret long after the election had closed and stuffed them with a directed number of ballots." In interviews in recent years more than a score of Texas politicians and political observers who were active in the nineteen-thirties and forties unanimously disagree with Johnson's contention. More tellingly, the only three members of the Johnson campaign's high command who were still alive in the nineteen-eighties—John B. Connally, who became governor of Texas; Edward A. Clark, who was for decades an immensely powerful figure in Texas politics (in the nineteen-fifties he was called the state's "Secret Boss"); and George R. Brown, of Brown & Root—did not agree with it, either. Valley votes had never before been decisive in a statewide election, Connally says. "Never. Never before 1948." Ed Clark says, "I never did know of a situation like that. I just never did know of anything that was similar to what was happening down *there in that area*." And they explained why: the unprecedented size of the Parr-delivered vote in 1948, and the timing of the delivery. Over the years, Clark says, "a lot of different people" had been given top-heavy majorities down there, but these majorities had "never" been given after the votes had been reported. "See, down there one of the questions that was often asked, when five or six good friends got together, you understand, was 'Does that fellow vote 'em' "—that is, herd impoverished, and often illiterate, Mexican-Ameri*can voters to the polls to cast* ballots as he ordered—" 'or does he just count 'em?' " And if he just "counted 'em," or simply wrote numbers on a tally sheet, Clark explains, and could go on "counting 'em" after the election had been over for some days, he could decide the result of any close statewide election—just by counting more, as needed.

Edgar Shelton, Jr., an Austin resident with unique access to the Duke of Duval and his generally close-mouthed retainers because his father and two uncles were all lawyers for George Parr and talked to Shelton freely, as well as put him in touch with Parr's top aides, had seen in 1946 "the possible dangers of those [Valley] machines." What, Shelton asked, "if we had two men running for an important office such as Senator or Governor, one of them being . . . dishonest? Assume that the dishonest man had secured a pledge of support from the bosses of the Valley, as he probably would. If the race were close and the honest man was ahead by only a few thousand votes with all of the returns in except from 'The Valley' . . . the election could easily be 'stolen' by having 'The Valley' counties send in just enough votes to put the dishonest man in office. Thus the will of the people of the State would be denied by less than a dozen men, all political feudal lords of 'The Valley.' "

"This," Shelton wrote in 1946, "has probably not yet happened." Every longtime Texas politician interviewed agrees that before 1948 it probably never had. Not even the most arrogant border dictator had ever dared to do that, they say. Indeed, two days after Election Day in 1941 Lyndon Johnson had asked George Parr to do precisely that, and Parr had refused, because his county's overwhelming majority for Johnson had already been recorded; he later told friends that he had replied, "Lyndon, I've been to the federal penitentiary, and I'm not going back for you." (Parr had pled guilty to income-tax evasion in 1934 and had served nine months of a two-year term.) Ed Clark says, "I just never saw—now, there have been other close contests, but" never one in which there had been "a feeling that a result might be changed by an investigation of those controlled counties." In addition, Clark ridicules the theory that Steven*son aides were also stealing votes on a* widespread scale throughout the state. Asked about it, the "Secret Boss" of Texas laughs. "They didn't know how, and Governor Stevenson didn't know how," he says. And, Clark adds, in a view echoed by politicians familiar with Texas politics of the time, stealing votes on a widespread scale would have been impossible for Stevenson after Election Day even if he had wanted to try it: "Preparations had to be made in advance for that sort of thing; contacts have to be made; it takes organization." The members of the Stevenson camp, Clark points out, were so unprepared for the second primary "two of their counties weren't even holding a primary." But George Parr had now done for Lyndon Johnson what Shelton had feared could one day happen. The unwritten laws, the ethics, the morals of Texas politics were so loose and elastic that it was difficult to break them. Yet Lyndon Johnson had broken them.

COKE STEVENSON was conversant with Valley politics. He had been the recipient of the Valley's support in the past, not that its support had ever had any significance to a man whose victories in gubernatorial elections had been won by hundreds of thousands of votes. But he knew the limits within which these politics operated—and he felt that it was by going beyond those limits that Lyndon Johnson had beaten him. The former Governor felt particularly strongly about the timing of those decisive changes in the Valley's vote. Johnson had claimed that the votes in Duval, Jim Wells, Zapata, Starr, and other Parr-dominated counties had all been counted on Election Night, and that the counts had not been changed thereafter. Stevenson believed they had. He was certain that Johnson had, by those changes, stolen the election from him. Two things now motivated Coke Stevenson. One was personal: his injured vanity and pride, and the simple code by which he lived, the Code of the West. When someone stole something from you, you got it back—or, at least, brought the thief to justice. The other went beyond the personal: it was his belief—a belief so deep that it was "almost like a religion" to this self-educated lawyer—in democracy and the law. If this could happen, if an election could so blatantly be stolen, neither democracy nor law could prevail.

He decided to do something about it.

First, he sent men to the Valley. The head of the team investigating Duval County, a San Antonio attorney named Pete Tijerina, says that when the team began interviewing residents who were certified as having voted "many said they hadn't. They told us their county commissioner had picked up their poll-tax receipts and voted for them." But when the investigators attempted to get these statements notarized they found that no notary public in Duval County would do so. "We were stopped by sheriffs' deputies, one of whom had a submachine gun. They said they heard we had guns. We told them we had no guns, but they made us spread-eagle while they searched us. They then told us we had thirty minutes to get out of Duval County. We got out in that time."

To investigate in Jim Wells County, Stevenson asked the help of three young attorneys. One, Callan Graham, had been an impoverished youth in Junction, the isolated Hill Country town in which Stevenson had practiced law when he had been young. Stevenson had encouraged Graham to take up the law, had loaned him his books and his office to study in, and, after Graham had been admitted to the bar "in the old-fashioned way" (without attending the university), had helped him through the early years of practice by quietly referring cases to him. Graham idolized Stevenson; he was proudest of his election, in 1948, to the legislature because his seat was the one Coke had once held. The other two lawyers, T. Kellis Dibrell and James Gardner, partners in San Antonio, had been agents of the Federal Bureau of Investigation, in whose awesome reputation Stevenson believed; Stevenson telephoned them and, in Dibrell's words, asked them to go and "see what we could find out."

The three men were ill equipped for the mission. "I had no badge or gun—I was a young lawyer," Dibrell recalls. "It was an awful big assignment, and I didn't know where to start." And they were, frankly, as Graham puts it, "a little uptight going into this area we'd heard so much about." They had been warned at Stevenson's Austin headquarters "that they were known to kill people down there," he says. And when the three young attorneys arrived in Alice, the county seat, at the end of a jouncing hundred-and-fifty-mile trip through the empty South Texas brush country, the atmosphere in the little town did not relax them. Unshaven Mexican *pistoleros*, wearing Colts or carrying Winchester rifles, stood in groups along Main Street staring silently at the visitors.

The three young men had brought along a book on election law, but hardly had they arrived when they learned what so many visitors had learned before them: that Jim Wells County, like much of the Texas brush country, was a land outside the law, in which printed legalities did not apply. The law stated clearly, Graham was to recall, that every citizen has a right to look at the election tally sheet, and at the "poll list"—the list on which was recorded the names of individuals as they signed in to vote. "It is very clearly stated in the law, so we thought there'd be no problem," he says. These documents were in the possession of B. F. (Tom) Donald, who until several days before had been secretary of Jim Wells County's Democratic Executive Committee, and cashier at the Texas State Bank of Alice, which was George Parr's bank. The three attorneys went to Donald's office at the bank and asked to see the documents. "No," Donald replied. Graham recalls:

STUART LEEDS

> We cited the law to him. That, in retrospect, was rather comical. We said, "Well, here's the law right here. It says any citizen has the right to see it." He said, "I know that. But you can't see them because they're locked up in that vault, and I'm not going to unlock the vault. That's why you can't see them." As I say, that's kind of comical now. He didn't say he wasn't going to show them to us, he said, "I won't open the vault. They're locked up in the bank vault, and I will not open it."

Donald's refusal to show the documents made the three lawyers suspect that they might contain the proof they were looking for: the proof that the Precinct 13 vote had been altered—that the crucial two hundred votes had been added to Lyndon Johnson's total after the polls closed, and after the time on Election Night when the smaller total was reported to the Texas Election Bureau. The lawyers went to see the "reform" members of the county's Democratic Executive Committee, who confirmed these suspicions. One reform member, E. M. Brownlee, was to say that he had seen the precinct's tally sheet, from which the Executive Committee took the vote before making its official report. And, Brownlee later testified, "about, possibly, 200 tallies from . . . the end," the ink in which the votes were being marked "had changed." The tallies up to that point had been written almost entirely in black ink; after that point, they were all in blue ink. Harry Lee Adams, who had, in Graham's words, "snuck in" as the new chairman of the Executive Committee while Parr "wasn't looking," had first been denied a look at the tally sheet or the poll list by Donald—although by law he, not Donald, was the official entitled to their possession—but on a later visit to the bank Adams had, although still denied possession of the documents, been allowed a brief look at the poll list. And his brief look, Adams said, had been enough. While he was jotting down the names of the individuals who were alleged to have voted, he said, he had noticed that approximately two hundred names from the end—at No. 842, to be precise—the ink in which they were written had changed. Up to

No. 842, the names had all been written in black ink; beginning with No. 842, they had all been written in blue ink.

Brownlee's and Adams' stories convinced the three lawyers that the poll and tally lists contained the proof of dishonest voting in Precinct 13. With the lists, they felt, they could get the names of the final two hundred voters and simply ask them if they had indeed voted in the election and whom they had voted for. And the voters' testimony could be presented in a court of law. But Donald had refused to show them the lists. And they were not anxious to make another trip to the bank; they were, they admit, "intimidated" by the thought of walking again down that dusty street with men glaring at them and fingering rifles and revolvers as they passed.

So Coke Stevenson went to the Valley himself—and he took with him a representative of another law-enforcement body, one in which he, as a Texan, had even more faith than he had in the F.B.I., and one that was, in Texas, even more revered: the Texas Rangers. And he didn't take along just any Ranger but one of the toughest Rangers of them all—a Ranger who was, in fact, a figure even more legendary in Texas than Stevenson himself. For just before Stevenson left Austin he met Frank Hamer on the street.

Thirty years earlier, when Frank Hamer was a young Ranger and Coke Stevenson a young county attorney, newly appointed to his first public office, the two men had "lain out" together night after night in the hills of Kimble County to catch cattle rustlers. During the intervening years, they had become hunting companions and close friends. And now, when Hamer heard that Stevenson was going to the Valley, and heard why he was going, he stared at him for a long minute. And then he said, "Well, I'll just go down there with you."

IT was Frank Hamer who led the posse of lawmen who trailed Bonnie and Clyde for a hundred and two days, and set the ambush in which the famous bank robbers were finally killed, but that was only one of the episodes that had garlanded his career with glory. He first pinned on a Ranger's star in 1906, when he was twenty-two years old, six feet three, with broad shoulders and a lightning draw. His initial assignment was as one of seventeen Rangers dispatched to curb riots, punctuated by murders, that, despite the efforts of hundreds of federal troops, had been raging through the Rio Grande Valley for months. (The success of the seventeen led to the remark, possibly apocryphal, that came to symbolize the Texas Rangers: The sheriff of a mob-ravaged county telegraphed Ranger headquarters for assistance and received word that it would arrive on the next train. When the train pulled in, the sheriff was dismayed to see only one man disembark. "Only one Ranger?" he asked. "Only one riot," the Ranger explained.)

Hamer then became a "town tamer"—in a town, Navasota, that was very tough to tame. When he pinned on the city marshal's badge there, Navasota was a boomtown in which shootouts on the main street were so frequent that in three years at least a hundred men had died. After two years of what a writer called "Hamer's stern and unremitting justice," shootouts were a thing of the past; nobody wanted to incur Frank Hamer's wrath. Asked if he knew the marshal, a man replied, "Yes, *sir!* And when I see him coming, I just step aside."

Not long thereafter, Hamer was the state's key witness in a trial being held in a West Texas town. In an attempt to prevent him from testifying, a gunman jumped out from a hiding place and shot him at point-blank range as he was passing on the street. Wounded in his gun arm and hand but still on his feet, Hamer, as the historian Mary Kahl put it, "calmly observed that the man's gun had jammed." He snatched it out of his assailant's hand. A second gunman jumped out and fired. Barely missing Hamer's head, the bullet tore a hole in his Stetson. Seeing him still on his feet, the two assailants turned and ran. One kept running; he was to escape until he was later arrested. The other made the mistake of pausing for a last shot. By that time, Hamer, despite his wound, had his gun out in his uninjured hand, and shot him dead.

By the nineteen-thirties, Frank Hamer had been wounded seventeen times; at least twice he had been left for dead. He had killed fifty-three men. Despite his refusal to give interviews and his dislike of publicity, the tall, powerful Texas Ranger, with his black suit, his invariable courtesy, and his laconic speech, had become a mythical figure in Texas. The historian Walter Prescott Webb called him one of the "most fearless men in Western History." A Hollywood writer said, "It's embarrassing to describe Frank Hamer in these days of . . . Westerns. One can hear about him . . . and then one realizes that Hamer is the real character all . . . casting directors are striving for." His toughness had become mythical, too. Looking down at Bonnie Parker's bullet-riddled body in 1934, he had affected regret at having been forced to shoot a woman. But, asked in private about the climactic gun battle, he would say, "I hated to bust a cap on a lady"—and smile. And his reputation—and his grim bearing—were weapons in themselves. His biographers, John Jenkins and H. Gordon Frost, report that during the thirties, when he was more than fifty years old, he was called in to end the violence in a particularly bloody dock strike in Houston; walking out onto a dock on which swirled an angry crowd of striking longshoremen, Hamer approached the largest man he could find. "I'm Frank Hamer," he said. "This strike is over." And it was. In 1948, he was sixty-four years old and long retired from regular duty, although as a Special Ranger, employed by the Texas Oil Company to protect its property, he was still allowed to carry a gun. He didn't wear it anymore, but when Coke Stevenson told him he was going to the Valley he went home and strapped it on.

ARRIVING in Alice, they met Dibrell and Gardner in a room in the Alice Hotel, and were told that the election records were still being kept in the bank. Stevenson said he wanted to go there, and the two lawyers said that, of course, they would go, too. While they were up in the room, the whisper was running through the town: "Coke Stevenson's here! And Frank Hamer's with him!" A reporter walking into the courthouse heard the name on all sides: "Hamer!" "Hamer!" "Hamer!"

Hamer told the men in the hotel room to take off their suit jackets, so that people could see they weren't armed. He took his off, too—so that people could see he was. They clattered down the stairs of the hotel and out onto Alice's main street and, in a scene that would be incredible if it were not attested to by witnesses for both sides, walked the two hundred yards to the bank. The lawyers trailed a few paces behind. Coke Stevenson and Frank Hamer walked side by side, two tall, broad-shouldered, erect, silent men: two living legends of Texas, in fact—two men out of another, vanishing age, another, vanishing code, marching down a street in a dusty Texas town to find out for themselves, and prove to the world, how Lyndon Johnson had obtained his two hundred crucial votes.

Back in the hotel room, the two young lawyers had been a little disappointed at their first look at the famous Frank Hamer. "He appeared to be an . . . old man," Dibrell recalls. And then, coming out of the hotel, Hamer saw George Parr's *pistoleros*. There were more of them this time. "Everywhere you turned, there were people with guns on," Dibrell says. One group of perhaps five was directly in Hamer's path. Another, somewhat larger, was standing in the very door of the bank. As he approached them, Hamer didn't even slow down. His biographers were to write that when he approached the first group he said, "Git!," and at the second he ordered, "Fall back!" Some witnesses don't remember any words at all; they only remember how, watching the old Texas Ranger walk down the street, they suddenly realized how big he was, and how he carried himself—and how his right hand was poised just above the butt of his gun, his fingers curled for the draw. And they remember how, as Dibrell puts it, "when Frank Hamer walked down the street those clusters of people parted." The *pistoleros* in front of the bank, having stepped aside for Stevenson, evidently intended to follow him inside, but Hamer turned and stood in the doorway, his hand still poised above his gun. None of the men facing him moved. After a few minutes, they walked away.

INSIDE, Stevenson was confronting Tom Donald in his office. He said he wanted to see the tally sheet and the poll list and copy all the names on the poll list, and when Donald refused to allow him to do so Stevenson, as he was to state in an affidavit, "advised him that I was being deprived of my rights under federal law"—and advised him also, in the dry words of the affidavit, "of the consequence thereof." The one reporter who was present, James M. Rowe, of the Corpus Christi *Caller-Times*, recalls, "Coke was like a glacier—he could look really mean." Donald took out the list and tally sheet and showed them to Stevenson and his men, and for a few moments—a vital few moments—Dibrell and Gardner studied them intently. When they began copying names from the poll list, Donald said "No, you can't do that!" and snatched it away, but, as Rowe was to write in his manuscript biography of George Parr, "Mesquite Pendergast," the two lawyers had had time to memorize some of the names, and the numbers beside them, and they rushed into the bank's outer room and wrote them down. They had been alerted by Adams and Brownlee as to the crucial points, and had looked at those first—and they had had time to confirm what

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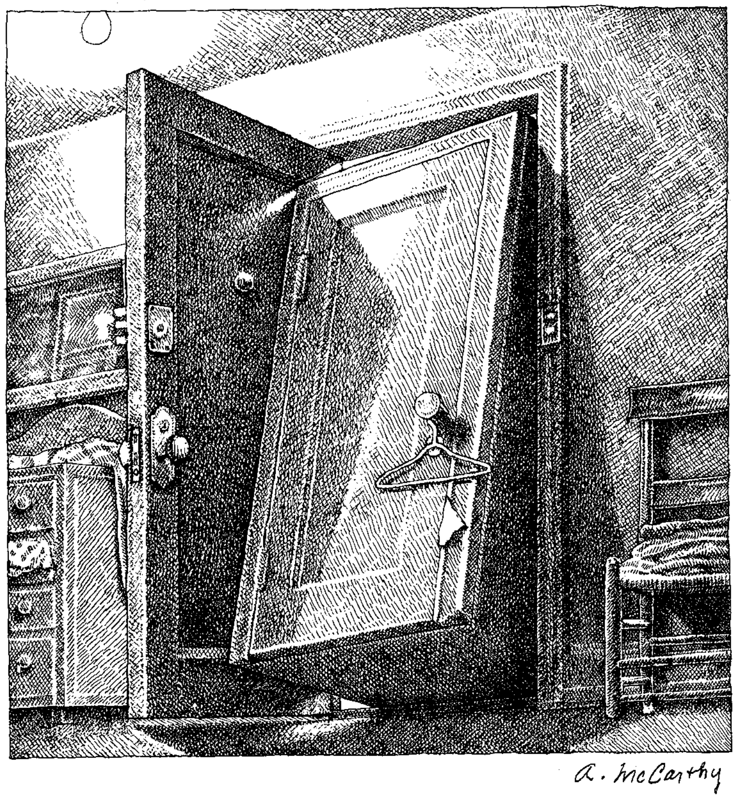
the two local men had told them: that the last 201 names on the list (two hundred of whom were listed as voting for Johnson, one for Stevenson) had been written in the same ink, different from that previously used, and in the same handwriting, different from that which had previously appeared. They noticed, moreover, something that the two Alice men had not: that the 201 names were in alphabetical order—the first few names, starting with No. 842, began with "A," the next few with "B," until about 915, when the end of the alphabet was reached; then the "A"s began again—as if whoever had been writing the names had miscalculated and got to the end of the alphabet too fast, and had thereupon simply gone back to the "A"s and started over. The two lawyers also did something that Adams and Brownlee had not done: they memorized—and now wrote down—the last name in black ink, the name of voter No. 841. If the moment of change came at 842, who was 841, and what could he tell them? James Gardner had also looked at the tally sheet—and had made a discovery that dwarfed all the others: Johnson's partisans were arguing that the count of Precinct 13 had not been changed—that no one had ever said Johnson's vote total was 765, that it had always been 965. The certification on the tally sheet gave the lie to that argument, Gardner felt. "The certificate showed that the vote for Lyndon Johnson was 965," he was to testify, "but it was evident from looking at the 965 that the 9 had been changed. It previously had been a 7. . . . The 7 had been worked over in pen and ink from a 7 around to a 9. . . . An additional loop [had been] added to the 7 to make a 9 out of it."


THE WALK-IN CLOSET

Armed with the names they had jotted down and those which Adams had obtained earlier, Dibrell and Gardner, together with Graham, set out to ascertain whether these "voters" could furnish additional information about the balloting in Precinct 13. It turned out that they could furnish quite a bit.

Persuading them to give evidence was difficult, because of the atmosphere of fear: fear of Parr; fear of Luis Salas and his deputies; fear of Parr's lawyer Ed Lloyd; and, for the unsophisticated, all but uneducated members of Alice's Mexican-American community, fear of Anglos in general. Years later, one of Stevenson's attorneys remembered vividly that one Mexican man told him, "People live longer down here if they keep their mouths shut." Nevertheless, evidence was given. The eight-hundred-and-forty-first voter on the poll list—the voter who, Stevenson's allies were convinced, was the last person who had in fact voted—was Eujenio Soliz, a twenty-eight-year-old worker on a county highway crew. And Soliz told them that he felt he probably had indeed been the last voter; he had arrived at the Nayer Elementary School voting place at about 6:40 P.M. on Election Day, twenty minutes before the polls closed. When he left, some minutes later, after voting, "there was no one else coming up to vote." Gardner asked Soliz if he would give an affidavit affirming his statement. Soliz said he would—and he did, sitting in Gardner's automobile, while Gardner, resting a portable typewriter on his lap, took his statement down, and a notary listened and attested to it. Although Soliz said he understood it in English, his statement was read to him in Spanish, by Conrado Martinez, a local businessman, and Soliz signed it.

Then Stevenson's lawyers turned to the two hundred and one names listed after Soliz on the poll list of voters—two hundred of whom, the tally sheet said, had voted for Lyndon Johnson. Brownlee had taken down nine names during his brief look at the poll list, and the young lawyers had jotted down additional names. They asked each of these people if they had voted for Lyndon Johnson. No, they replied, they had not; they had not, they said, voted for anyone. Without exception, the people questioned said they had not been to the polls at all on Election Day. For one of them, twenty-one-year-old Hector Cerda, a college student, voting in Jim Wells County would have been difficult. He hadn't *been* in Jim Wells County that day, he explained; he had spent the day in the town of Pharr, a hundred and nine miles away, and had not returned until late that night, long after the polls closed. For three other persons whose names were listed as voting, the lawyers were told, voting would have been even more difficult. They had been dead for some time.

NOW, Coke Stevenson believed, he had proof that the decisive two hundred votes had been stolen—that they had not been cast by voters at all, that that number had simply been added to Lyndon Johnson's total several days after the election—and he believed that this proof would enable him to have these votes thrown out and give him victory.

They could be thrown out at either of two levels—local or state—and he moved on both levels at once. While what one newspaper described as "a small army of attorneys" went from house to house in Alice collecting affidavits, Stevenson swore to his own, summarizing the evidence of "fraud . . . errors and irregularities" in Precinct 13 already collected, filed it with the county clerk, and petitioned the Jim Wells County Democratic Executive Committee to meet and recertify a new, correct tabulation of the county's votes to the State Democratic Executive Committee. Nine of the seventeen members of the newly elected county committee met. They heard their new chairman, Harry Adams, their secretary, H. L. (Ike) Poole, and Brownlee add to Stevenson's affidavit what they themselves knew about the counting of the vote at the Nayer School and about their own investigation; as a result, Poole was to say, "I am confident there are more than two hundred people shown as voting who did not vote." (Poole was also to tell reporters, "I helped gather the evidence and obtain affidavits from more than two hundred such people.") The committee then passed a resolution that its members felt would eliminate the two hundred votes once and for all, and it was certainly unequivocal: "The County Democratic Executive Committee of Jim Wells County [has] evidence of fraud and irregularities" in the county's Precinct 13, it said, and "it is the opinion of the [committee] that the certified report to the state committee was not a true and correct picture of the results of the election as held in [that] Precinct." Since the committee "had been denied" all records of the voting in Precinct 13, it could not determine the true vote, the resolution said, and it therefore could not draw up a new certification to replace the one already sent to the state committee; the state committee should therefore itself "investigate and determine the number of votes received by each candidate," and substitute the correct totals for the incorrect ones. Later that day, the reformers on the committee, meeting among themselves, decided that the denial of the records need not handcuff them as totally as that resolution implied, and that they could draw up a new certification themselves, without waiting for the state committee; the certification could either return the Precinct 13 vote to the one originally reported Election Night, thereby removing two hundred votes from Johnson's total or, since the fraud and irregularities in that precinct were, they felt, so widespread, they could throw out the precinct entirely,

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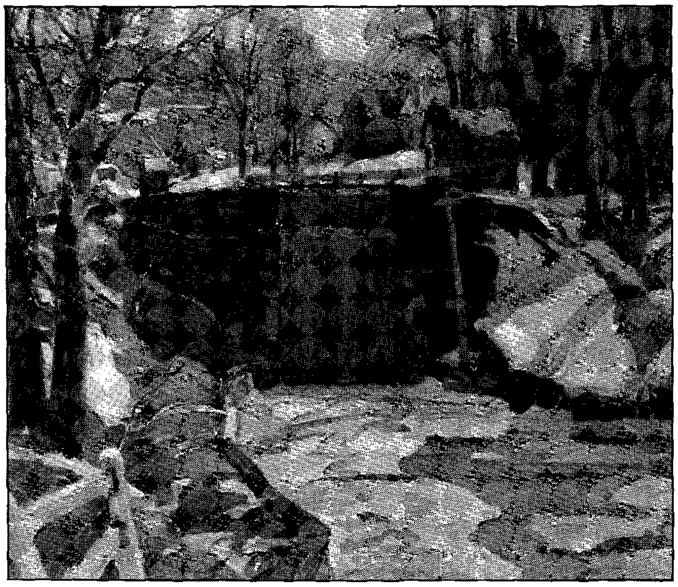

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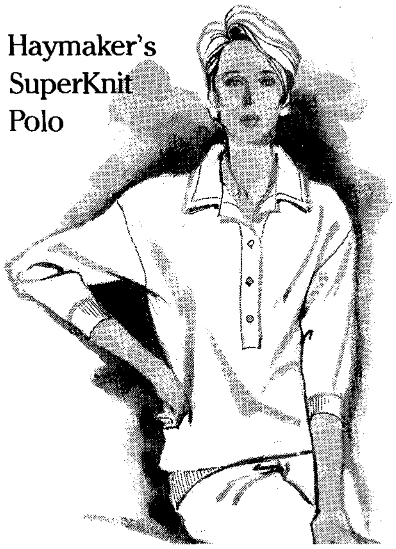
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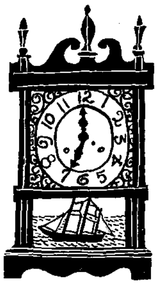
thereby removing 965 votes from Johnson's total (and 60 from Stevenson's). It is "expected," the Austin *American-Statesman* reported, that "an entirely new resolution of certification [will] be drawn up by the new [county] committee and presented to the Democratic State Executive Committee as a substitute for that filed by the outgoing county committee." And, the committee members said, since they were legally entitled to those voting lists, why not move legally to force Donald to turn them over? There were lawyers in Alice who were not under Parr's domination; they would hire one to force the bank cashier to do so.

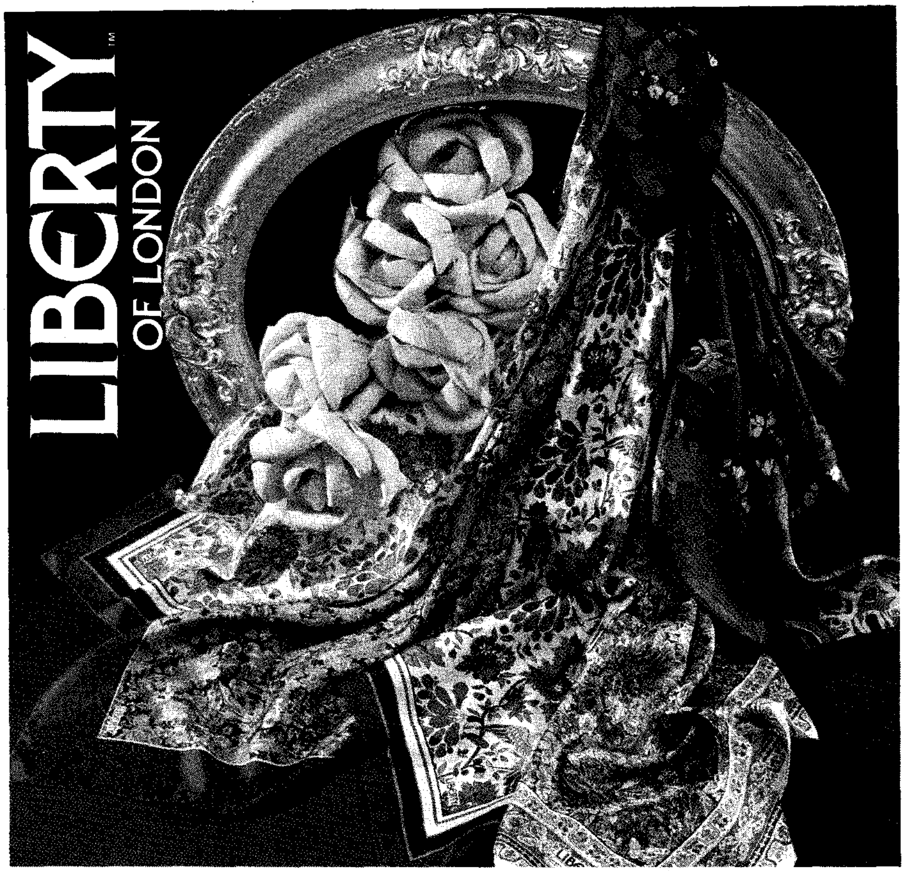


Stevenson's other recourse was his party. Its nominees would be determined at the Democratic Party convention, in Fort Worth—which was to begin the following Monday, September 13th—after reports from a "canvassing subcommittee" and from the full, sixty-two-member State Executive Committee, the Party's ruling body. Customarily, the committee certifications were pro forma; as a result of court decisions, it was generally accepted that neither committee would seriously consider disallowing an individual county's certification. But there was nothing pro forma about this election; and the Executive Committee members were sufficiently sophisticated about politics to understand what had happened down there in Precinct 13 and in the Valley as a whole, and the implications for future close statewide elections. What had happened, some committee members felt, was simply too raw, too blatant. Moreover, many of the committee members were old friends of Coke Stevenson's. In Fort Worth, Stevenson issued a statement saying he was prepared to appear before the Executive Committee "with proof that the returns in Jim Wells are not correct." They knew Coke: if he said he had proof, he had proof. When the committee members arrived in Fort Worth that weekend, reporters quickly realized that the Jim Wells certification was not considered a typical example of Texas election chicanery but an exceptional case—and was going to be seriously considered. "SENATE RACE MORE DOUBTFUL," headlines suddenly said, and "SPOTLIGHT TURNS ON SOUTH TEXAS"—on, to be more specific, a tiny town in South Texas. As the Corpus Christi *Caller-Times* explained, in a lead paragraph beginning with the rather unfamiliar dateline of Alice, "Voting Precinct 13 at Alice—not Duval or Harris or Dallas Counties—and its 1,027 [sic] disputed votes Friday became the issue that may decide whether Lyndon B. Johnson or Coke R. Stevenson will be the next senator from Texas."

Reporters raced to the Valley. On Primary Day, James Rowe had been unable to interest any major newspaper or wire service in reports from Jim Wells County. Now, he recalls, "all of a sudden people seemed to realize that a little town in Texas had elected a United States senator." Under the headline "THE DUKE DELIVERS," *Time* said, "Last week many Democrats from north and west Texas who never considered the dapper 'Duke of Duval' anything more than a local political princeling found he had become a powerful kingmaker. In the stretch of one of the closest political races in U.S. history, he was the man most responsible for Congressman Lyndon Johnson's nomination over Coke Stevenson for the U.S. Senate." Texas newspapers were agog over "the biggest political story in the state's history." And Texas reporters began to zero in on the specific charge Stevenson was making. A reporter from the Houston *Chronicle* interviewed Ike Poole, and the headline over the interview said flatly, "200 VOTES GIVEN JOHNSON AFTER PRIMARY." Suddenly, headlines about the Senate race were filled with a new word—"fraud."

Politics—the new politics—helped Johnson counter Stevenson's efforts. The influence of national politics and power on a state, already so evident during the campaign itself, was to intensify during the Party's convention. The 1948 Texas convention had national political implications. In four Southern states, Democrats had broken away from the national ticket and formed the States Rights Party, which would, in November, carry these states for its Presidential candidate, J. Strom Thurmond. For Harry Truman, far behind Thomas Dewey in the polls, it was considered imperative to keep Texas from deserting his party; the delegates chosen in May who didn't support him had to be ousted at this convention. The fight to do so would hinge on the ability of the "Loyalist" (in general, liberal) Truman Democrats to unseat the legally elected (by, in some cases, overwhelming margins) delegations from the "big" counties—Harris, Dallas, and Tarrant—on the convention floor, a fight that was going to be very close.

Johnson made use of this fact. The liberals, more sophisticated than the run of Texas politicians, were aware of Johnson's true, less than liberal, record in Washington; although he was more liberal than Stevenson, their support of him had never been enthusiastic. More idealistic on the whole than other Texas politicians, many of them were as outraged as the conservatives over the manner in which Johnson had attained his eighty-seven-vote majority. But now feelings about the senatorial campaign were submerged in feelings about the Presidential race. And Johnson told his men to take advantage of those feelings. They made an offer to the Loyalist leaders. The delegates with whom Johnson would have influence at the convention—most notably the delegations from Austin, San Antonio, and the Valley—would vote to unseat the States Rights delegations and vote to seat Loyalist delegations in their place. They would also vote for the Loyalist candidates for the new State Executive Committee that would be elected at the end of the convention, and for Loyalist candidates to all other convention posts. In return, Johnson asked for only one thing. It was couched in legal terms: his men, headed by the Austin attorney and lobbyist Alvin Wirtz (Connally was doing much of the legwork), were ostensibly asking for certification of the senatorial vote as it had been sent in by the individual counties, with no changes, and they claimed that this was the course prescribed by law. But what they were really asking for was plain to the Loyalist leaders. One of them, Robert Eckhardt, later a Houston congressman and in 1948 a key figure in the Loyalist group, was to tell Johnson biographer Ronnie Dugger that "Johnson was interested in preventing Box 13 from being opened. . . . His major purpose was not to permit the opening of Box 13." The request made the Loyalists all the more aware of what the crucial box was likely to contain, and ordinarily they might



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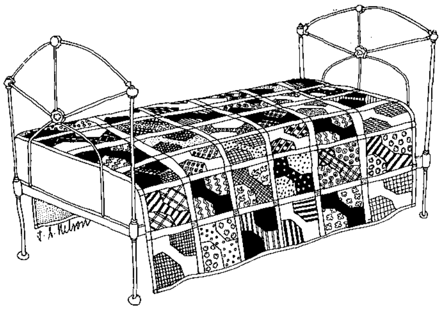
have balked, but now, as Eckhardt put it, "it seemed much more important to a lot of us . . . that there not be a bunch of electors that could throw away Texas votes" instead of giving them to Truman. So, as he told the journalist Robert Sherrill, "Connally and I connived on that," and the deal was struck.

Publicity helped, too. Johnson countered Stevenson's charges of vote stealing by saying—over statewide radio networks—that actually it was Stevenson who had stolen votes, not he. Stevenson's supporters "were strangely silent about the bloc vote which gave my opponent a thirty-thousand-vote lead coming out of three big cities," Johnson said. Moreover, he said, in Dallas, "they have counted me out of two thousand votes," and "nobody has asked for an investigation of . . . the River Oaks Box of Houston where Stevenson got eight out of every ten votes cast." There was vote switching in Brown County, he said, and he had been cheated in rural counties as well. "You didn't hear of the Kenedy County bloc vote, where only eight votes were in the Johnson column," Johnson said, and he listed three other suspicious counties or boxes.

Those charges would not have been very convincing to anyone who examined them closely. In Dallas, for example, there had been four changes in the returns, and not all of them favored Stevenson. Besides, they were the result not of late returns but of clerical errors; the most significant of them, made by a clerk who typed a "9" instead of a "7" in a Johnson column, gave *Johnson*, not Stevenson, two thousand more votes than he deserved. (Dallas' official certificate, one writer pointed out, "corrected that error, and the final returns were certified, without protest from Johnson leaders, on September 4.") Johnson's reference to Stevenson's thirty-thousand total plurality in Houston, Dallas, and Fort Worth as a "bloc" vote was totally misleading: in none of the three cities, which together cast a total of 173,617 votes—100,499 for Stevenson and 73,118 for Johnson—was there any pattern of "bloc" voting other than the normal heavy majorities for Stevenson in upper-income, conservative precincts and for Johnson in low-income and black precincts (and in precincts with heavy concentrations of workers in defense-related industries). Houston's River Oaks Box, "where Stevenson got eight out of every ten votes," was the city's wealthiest enclave; it always voted heavily for a conservative candidate. Nobody but Johnson ever suggested that there was any illegality in the voting there; in saying that "nobody has asked for an investigation" of it Johnson was correct—and nobody ever would. In Brown County, there certainly was a heated contest going on—however, it was not over the Senate election but over the election of a county judge. Ballots would indeed be ruled invalid there, but not because of anything to do with the Senate race.

As for rural counties, in Kenedy County, which Johnson charged was a "bloc vote," he was correct, but the "bloc" was only fifty-two votes. (Kenedy County consisted largely of a division of the King Ranch, whose owners, the Klebergs, distrusted Johnson.) In the two other rural counties he mentioned, the totals were also minuscule. Not one of the state's two hundred and fifty-four counties voted for Stevenson by ratios comparable to those Johnson received in the Valley. Votes were certainly stolen for Stevenson—Stevenson's totals were "corrected" in dozens of counties, just as Johnson's were "corrected" in dozens of counties other than the Valley counties—but in numbers so small as to bear no comparison with the majorities Johnson received in the Valley. Furthermore, the "corrections" in the totals of the two candidates after Election Day—corrections that followed the traditional Texas pattern—were so balanced as to virtually offset each other, and these corrections had no significance in the final result.

HAVING seen the evidence, and filed his affidavit, Stevenson left Alice with Frank Hamer on Friday evening, September 10th. Before him was the weekend, during which the reform majority of the Jim Wells County Democratic Committee was determined to meet and correct the county's voting tally before the State Democratic Convention began. At the far side of the weekend, at 10 A.M. Monday, the convention would open in Fort Worth, to certify the result of the primary. All through that weekend, Coke Stevenson and Lyndon Johnson engaged in a grim, bitter struggle—and during it a pattern emerged that was to characterize the remainder of the fight between the two men. Stevenson was trying to get the ballot box and the record of Precinct 13 open, to let Texans see the evidence that he and his men had seen—the loop added to change a "7" into a "9," and the two hundred ballots that supposedly supported that change. Johnson was trying to keep the records closed.



The pattern was set in the weekend's opening skirmish. The meeting of the Jim Wells Democratic Committee, at which reformers were planning formally to demand the records, and, whether or not they were produced, to throw out the tainted two hundred votes, might be convened at any moment. It had to be stopped—and it had to be stopped fast.

Behind the broad, amiable smile of Alvin Wirtz was, a fellow-attorney said, a mind "as quick as chain lightning"—a mind that was always thinking "three steps ahead" of his opponents. On Saturday morning, while the Jim Wells reformers were planning their strategy for the county-committee meeting, telegrams were delivered to their homes—telegrams, signed by a judge, forbidding them to hold one.

Jim Wells County was in the state's 79th Judicial District. The District Court was, George Parr's biographer Dudley Lynch writes, "Parr's home turf," the judge, Lorenz Broeter, of Alice, his "loyal supporter." But on this crucial Friday Judge Broeter happened to be holding court in Starr County. It would take perhaps two hours to get there and locate him, and in two hours a meeting might be convened, a new certification made. There were, however, judges conveniently at hand in Austin. An affidavit was hastily typed up, and Lyndon Johnson signed it. In it Johnson charged that Stevenson, Hamer, and Dibrell, as well as Adams, Poole, and the fifteen other members of the Jim Wells committee, had "entered into a conspiracy for the purpose of causing the votes in Precinct No. 13 in Jim Wells County to be thrown out on the grounds of fraud and irregularity." Johnson claimed that Stevenson had threatened and intimidated Adams and Poole into calling a meeting of the committee to "make a new tabulation" and that Adams would call that meeting "at any instant, unless restrained." And Johnson therefore asked that a temporary restraining order be issued on the spot, without a hearing, to stop the committee "from making any new tabulation, or attempting to recanvass the votes in Precinct No. 13, or hearing any contest, or eliminating any votes on grounds of illegality, fraud . . . and from making, sending or filing with the State Democratic Executive Committee any returns" other than those already sent in—the ones containing the disputed two hundred votes—until Broeter could rule. Everett Looney, Ed Clark's law partner, hurried over to an Austin district judge, Roy Archer, of the 126th District, with the affidavit and a proposed temporary restraining order signed by him and Wirtz (Looney's name came first; Wirtz never put his name first on anything if he could help it), and with the argument that unless the order was issued at once Johnson would suffer irreparable harm from the committee's "conspiracy." Archer signed the order, and a telegram embodying it was instantly dispatched to every committee member.

Archer's order shocked attorneys knowledgeable in the state's election law; Mary Kahl, author of "Ballot Box 13," a study of the election, states that the order "amazed and angered others not directly related to the proceedings or to the Senate race. . . . Lawyers across the state searched in vain for a legal precedent for an Austin judge restraining an official Democratic Party meeting hundreds of miles away in another county." Stevenson understood the reason for Wirtz's maneuver; it was, he said angrily, an "obvious attempt to prevent the truth from coming out of Jim Wells County until after the State Executive Committee had canvassed the returns on Monday." But a judicial order was a judicial order. When Adams, who, of course, did not feel he had been intimidated or threatened by *anyone* (at least, not by anyone on Coke Stevenson's side), took Archer's telegram to an anti-Parr attorney in Alice, he was told bluntly what it meant: "Even if it [the election] was

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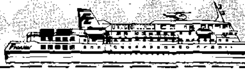

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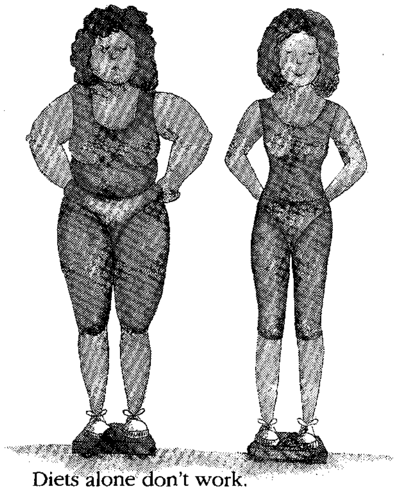

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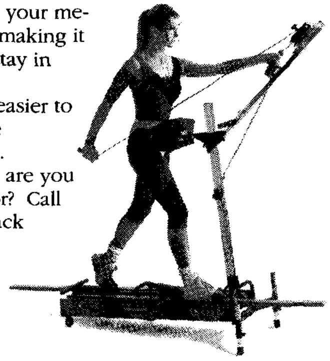

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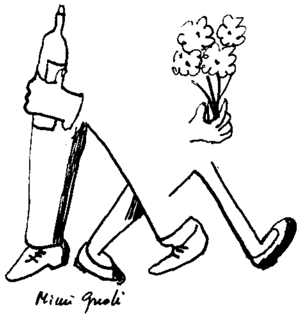
stolen, you're not to do anything." Wirtz's maneuver worked. "Of course we'll obey the law," Poole told a reporter; there would be no meeting until Judge Broeter ruled. And Broeter, George Parr's loyal supporter, notified of Archer's order, said he would hold a hearing—but not until Monday morning. Monday, of course, was the day of the state-committee canvassing. And once the state committee had opened the Jim Wells returns—the returns that the present Jim Wells committee felt were false—and certified them, the feelings of the Jim Wells committee wouldn't matter.

WHILE his lawyers were fighting the rearguard delaying action in Alice over the weekend, Lyndon Johnson himself was engaged on the main front, in Fort Worth, four hundred miles to the north. He had rushed there on Sunday afternoon after dispatches from his lieutenants told him that on this front he was losing. Two battles—two votes—would be waged on this front on Monday. The first vote would be taken by a seven-member subcommittee of the State Executive Committee to canvass and certify (in theory, to examine and make official) the returns from the two hundred and fifty-two counties that had held elections and then to make a report (in effect, a recommendation as to who the Party's nominee should be) to the full, sixty-two-member Executive Committee. The second vote would be taken by the Executive Committee on whether or not to accept the "canvassing subcommittee's" report: on whether, in other words, to recommend that the full convention name as the Party's official nominee the candidate named by the subcommittee—or some other candidate.



In this election, the canvassing subcommittee's certifications of the votes from the individual counties would be more than usually crucial. Once it had made official the vote from Jim Wells County to the Executive Committee, the attempts of the reformers down in Alice to submit a revised return would be largely moot: the certified return (the original return) would now be in the hands of the Executive Committee, with the weight of the subcommittee's certification behind it. If, however, the subcommittee refused to certify the Jim Wells vote, the nature of the entire Johnson-Stevenson fight could change dramatically—and unpredictably; the range of possibilities seemed endless. But one clear possibility loomed as disastrous to Johnson's supporters: that the reformers in Alice would, before the subcommittee finished its work, submit a revised return—one with the two hundred disputed Johnson votes subtracted from the county total—and that the subcommittee would certify *that* return instead of the original, thereby giving Stevenson a higher total statewide vote than Johnson.

It was to forestall this possibility that Alvin Wirtz had obtained that temporary restraining order forbidding the Jim Wells County Committee to revise the county's return. Without a revised return before it, the canvassing subcommittee could not, of course, certify it to the full Executive Committee; there would be nothing for it to certify except the original. On Monday, Johnson would be safe from a revised return as long as Judge Archer's order remained in force. That holding action in that District Court down in Alice was therefore the key to the subcommittee battle in Fort Worth. Johnson's attorneys felt that Judge Broeter might well keep the order in force until some later date. But even if Broeter voided the order Johnson would still be safe, so long as the dissolution did not come too early in the day. As far as the subcommittee battle was concerned, delay was the key; all that was required for victory was a delay of a few hours. Since the court hearing and the subcommittee's county-by-county certifications would be going forward simultaneously on Monday morning, there would be tense hours until Johnson could be sure that his attorneys back in Alice had delayed long enough. His attorneys assured him they would be able to do so.

The projections for Monday's second battle, the vote that evening in the Party's sixty-two-member Executive Committee, were, however, far less optimistic. The Executive Committee vote would be the decisive vote at the convention. "By custom," the reporter Allen Duckworth wrote, the full, two-thousand-member convention "accepts without question the report of an executive committee on winners of primary nominations." Johnson's advisers felt that it was the Executive Committee vote that would decide the outcome of his long fight. And, polling the committee's sixty-two members, his advisers found, to their consternation, that a majority favored rejecting any report from the canvassing subcommittee which did not throw out the tainted Jim Wells votes and name as the Democratic nominee not Lyndon Johnson but Coke Stevenson. Ed Clark and John Connally, bitter enemies who agree on little, agree on the situation in Fort Worth that weekend—in the same three words: "We were behind."

No parade greeted Lyndon Johnson when he got off the plane in Fort Worth; he was met by worried faces and big, black headlines: "SHOWDOWN MONDAY." At the Blackstone Hotel, he was ushered into a suite that had been hastily redecorated "in modernistic décor" for his visit, and he put on a confident front for reporters. He had a "comfortable majority" on the Executive Committee, he said, and was sure he would receive the certification. But after the press filed out he was handed a sheet of paper on which the names of the fifty-five members of the Executive Committee who were attending the convention had been divided into two columns according to the preferences they had expressed: one column for him, one for Stevenson. The list of names in Stevenson's column was longer—several names longer. The committee's ruling would probably be decisive, he was told. If it voted against him, his fight was over. His career was over. And it seemed that that was what the committee was likely to do. "Just one vote difference there and it was all over," Ed Clark recalls. "One vote: if they had ordered [Stevenson's name onto the ballot] there wasn't going to be much we could do. It was over." Recalling that night, Ed Clark stops talking and sits for long minutes behind his desk staring off into space, remembering. "The state convention," he says, at last. "That was when I thought we might lose."

Johnson's reaction to the news may never be known. Of those men who witnessed it only two were alive when research for this account began, and, no matter how frank these two—Ed

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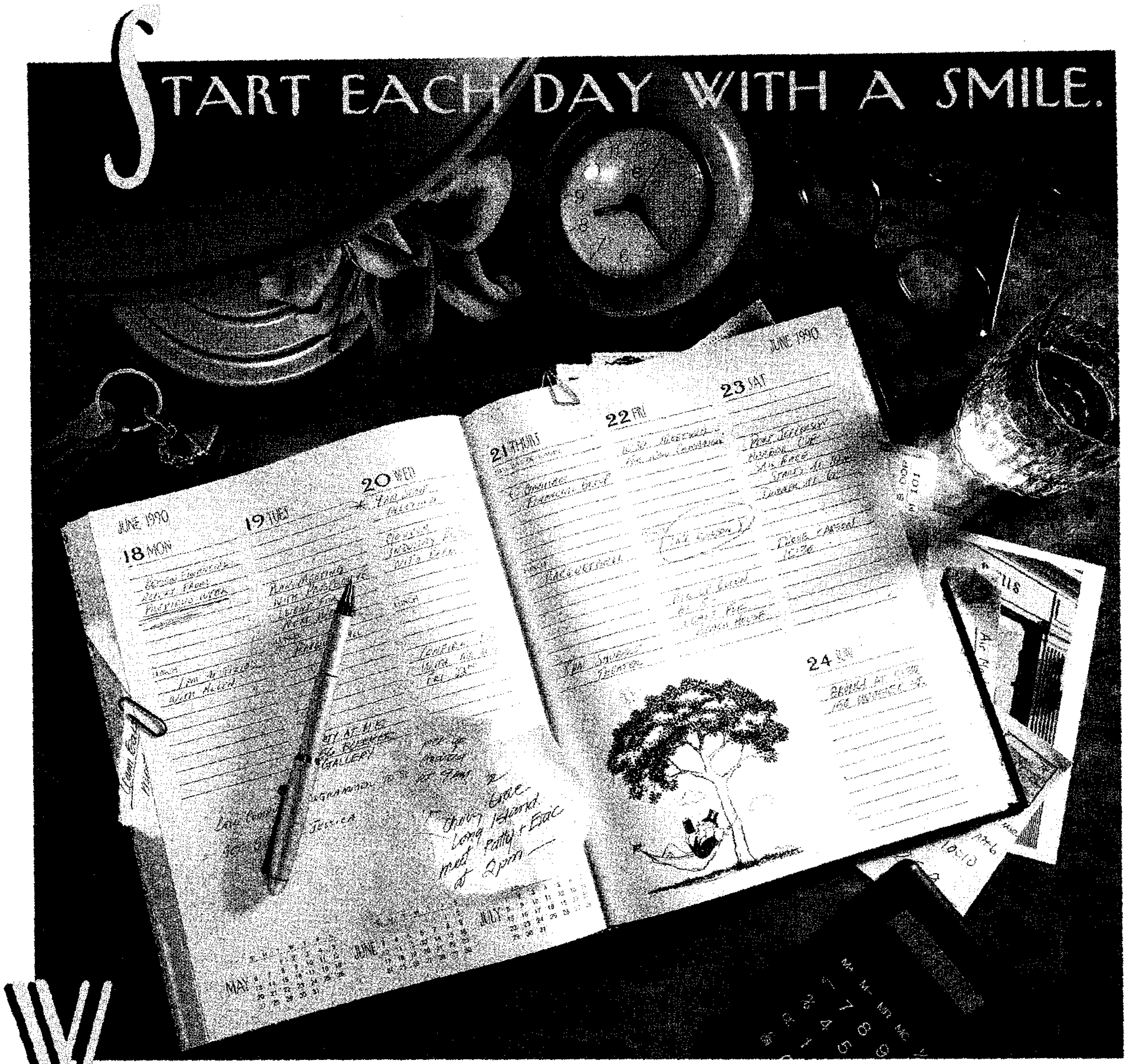

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"This dates the episode to 'seven years after the closing of the last decent seafood restaurant in the Great City.'"

• •

Clark and George Brown—have been in describing other episodes in Johnson's life, neither wanted to talk about this one. Clark, who was intimately associated with Johnson for thirty years and was at his right hand in a score of crises in Texas, will say only, "I never saw him so worried about anything." Brown would say only, "He was wild." After some hours, he grew calmer. By the time Connally saw him, he was, in Connally's words, "frantic, but orderly—'Get me this one. Get me that one' "—telephoning the Executive Committee members, and the men back in the members' home counties who could influence them. He was "calling all over the state to get pressure on the delegates any way he could." He interrupted his telephoning only to attend a barbecue for convention leaders, at which he arrived wearing a big smile and an air of confidence.

Johnson's telephone calls were not the ones that mattered most, however. He needed all his big guns on the line now, and, thanks to the Brown & Root and oil-company planes at his disposal, he could get them there; Clark, who came from San Augustine, in Deep East Texas, had been exerting pressure there, but some Executive Committee members from the East Texas districts were still on Stevenson's side. Clark was in his room when "Johnson called me and told me where to get a plane, and pick up Ben Ramsey in San Augustine so he could be in on the trouble we had up there." Ramsey was to be the Texas Secretary of State. Soon Ed Clark and Ramsey—the two most powerful men in East Texas—were prowling hotel corridors together, trying to bring the East Texas members into line for Lyndon Johnson.

And Johnson had not just Clark and Ramsey but the man behind Clark and Ramsey. He had wheeled up his biggest gun of all. Telephoning Herman Brown, George's older brother, in Houston, he asked him to come to Fort Worth. No one who knew Herman, and was aware of his contempt for politicians and his distaste for politicians in groups, thought he would come. "Herman Brown [had] never worked a convention in his life," his lobbyist Frank C. (Posh) Oltorf says. But he worked this one. Herman knew them all, it seemed. He knew the district judges and the county commissioners from the counties in which he had done road-contracting work long before he had received his first federal contract, and if he didn't know the judge or the commissioner to whom a stubborn Executive Committee member might listen he knew a subcontractor, a subcontractor who did work for Brown & Root or wanted to do work for Brown & Root in the future, who knew the judge or the commissioner. He knew the legislators with whom he had dealt on the state's anti-labor bills, and on a hundred other items, the men to whom he had sent envelopes filled with cash. And that night in Fort Worth Herman Brown called in all his chits. It was necessary that he call them in, he told the recipients of his calls, because if Lyndon Johnson didn't win in the Executive Committee tomorrow there might not be any more contracts—or subcontracts. The full, immense weight of the economic power of Brown & Root was thrown behind Lyndon Johnson that night. Three of the seven absent committee members were contacted by Herman Brown, and leaders in their counties were telephoned by Herman Brown, and then Herman Brown's plane went and collected the members—and there were three new votes for Lyndon Johnson.

But Coke Stevenson's side was working the committee members, too—and working hard—and his side had legislative leaders and state officials and county officials who had had alliances with Coke through many years, and all night the fight went on. "Johnson knew damn well that Stevenson had some real pros on his side," Oltorf says. "They might not have been working during the campaign, but they were working that night." Lyndon Johnson didn't sleep at all that night—and neither did his men. Midnight turned into one o'clock, and one o'clock into two, and Lyndon Johnson's men worked the corridors and the bars in the big hotels. At two o'clock and at three, Ed Clark's big hand was on the shoulders of committee members. "That was the longest night," Clark says. "I was up all night, and

Ben Ramsey was with me, and he was up all night." But no one knew which candidate was ahead. In this fight, the committee members were particularly anxious not to be joining the losing side. Clark recalls, "People were asking me for a commitment that if they gave me their vote they'd be on the winning side." But Clark had his code of honor. "I said, 'I cannot give that commitment.' " Some committee members were telling each side what it wanted to hear, so it was difficult to be certain even of some votes that had been promised. And, as pressures and counterpressures were brought to bear by both sides, votes kept shifting. "I knew we had turned around votes they still thought they had, and so I felt sure they had done the same to votes we still thought *we* had," Clark says. He was carrying around a list of the fifty-eight potential voters, he recalls, and he had to keep switching names from one column to the other. "I just didn't know how it was going to go," he says. The only certainty in the Johnson camp, and in the hotel room in which Lyndon Johnson sat all night amid the bright, modernistic décor in a shirt soaked with sweat, his face gray with fatigue and stubble, his eyes sunk in his head, hunched over a telephone and a list, was that, with those three new votes Herman Brown had flown in, it was going to be terribly close. Lyndon Johnson's fate was on the piece of paper lying on the desk in front of him—in that list in which votes were counted not in tens of thousands but one by one. And the list kept changing.

AS convention delegates and Executive Committee members were crowding into the Blackstone's high-ceilinged, dimly lit Venetian Ballroom at 10 A.M. on Monday, the lobby outside was filled with more delegates, and with tension. An elevator door opened and, behind a phalanx of aides, out stepped Lyndon Johnson. His hair was slicked down so flat that it might have been pasted to his skull; the circles beneath his eyes were as dark as bruises; his skin, covered with nicks from the closeness of his shave, was sallow. As his entourage was pushing through the crowd, one of its members, Jerome Sneed, of Austin, who was also a member of the Executive Committee, suddenly collapsed, gasping for breath and writhing in pain on the lobby floor from what appeared to be a heart at-

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tack. (It was later diagnosed as ptomaine poisoning.) Sneed was quickly surrounded by shouting, excited delegates—and by one man who was always calm, the man whose mind worked so fast. While other men knelt by Sneed's side and loosened his necktie and shouted for a doctor as he gasped in pain, Alvin Wirtz knelt by his side, scribbled something on a piece of paper, and, handing it to Sneed along with a pen, told him to sign it. Sneed did. It was his proxy: Wirtz had preserved a vote for Johnson.

Johnson entered the ballroom in the midst of his aides, smiling, waving, and reaching out to shake hands. Stevenson had arrived early, and was sitting quietly puffing his pipe. As Johnson was passing Stevenson's seat, an enterprising newspaper photographer tried to persuade them to pose together. The two men were not far apart; "just for a moment, they looked like two dogs wanting to get at each other and held back by a leash," a man who was between them says. The moment passed. Stevenson's mask and Johnson's smile were back on, they turned away from each other, and Johnson and his entourage moved to another part of the big room. Pulling out a pack of cigarettes, Johnson lit one, drawing on it deeply; oblivious for once of photographers, he put on his eyeglasses.

After the seven members of the "canvassing subcommittee"—three neutral; two representing Stevenson; two (Wirtz and Alma Lee Holman, of Taylor) representing Johnson—were appointed, at about 10:45 A.M., the subcommittee began its meeting in the ballroom.

At almost the same moment, the District Court hearing began in Alice, so that for the next few hours the two interlocking actions were proceeding simultaneously. During those hours, therefore, the pattern—of Stevenson trying to open the Box 13 records and Johnson trying to keep the records closed—became clear. And so did the tactics—haste in Fort Worth, delay in Alice—by which Johnson's men were trying to accomplish his aims.

In Fort Worth, Wirtz was attempting to hurry the subcommittee through its work. Stacks of big manila envelopes were piled on the stage of the Venetian Ballroom: the returns for two hundred and fifty-two counties. Wirtz wanted to dispense with opening them. No sooner had the subcommittee meeting begun than Wirtz moved that the subcommittee, without any further deliberations, certify the previously reported figures as official and report to the full Executive Committee that Johnson was the nominee. And when this motion failed—the subcommittee's three neutral members agreeing with Stevenson's representatives that it was their function to canvass the election county by county—Wirtz kept urging the canvassing along.

In Alice, meanwhile, Johnson's representative, an attorney named Dudley Tarleton, was working to keep that restraining order in effect until the subcommittee had finished its work so that no new certification from Jim Wells County could be reported to it.

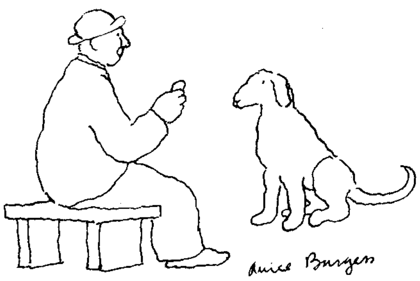
Stevenson's attorney, Wilbur Matthews, considered the case so clear-cut that before the hearing in Alice had begun he had thought it wouldn't take long. No court should stop the Jim Wells County Democratic Committee from opening the records, investigating the returns, and, should the findings justify such an action, revising the returns, he said. Judge Archer's restraining order "has no parallel in the judicial history of the United States" and "no justification under Texas law," he said, and should be dissolved at once.

Tarleton, however, read, in what Matthews considered "a deliberate manner," Judge Archer's order and Johnson's petition asking for the order. He read "at length" from the primary-election statutes. Then he started in on various court decisions. It was evident, Matthews was to write, "that he was stalling for time." He was still reading when Judge Broeter called a two-hour recess for lunch. And he was still reading when court resumed after the recess. (The more substantive side of Tarleton's argument was studded with legalisms and technicalities. The laws forbidding state courts to intervene in primaries referred only to a first primary; second primaries were not mentioned, he said. County committees might be empowered to "convene" to certify precinct votes, but the laws did not mention "re-convening." To change the certification, he said, the Jim Wells committee would have to hold another meeting, and the law's omission made such "re-convening" illegal.)

Tarleton's recitation may have been unnecessary—as an extralegal occurrence in the court proceedings that morning may have hinted. The occurrence was the arrival in court of George Parr. Striding past the benches where other spectators sat, he pushed through the low swinging door into the section of the courtroom customarily reserved for attorneys, and sat down at the table with Johnson's attorneys, relaxed and at ease, as if he owned the courtroom (which, of course, many of the persons watching him felt he did). His nonchalance slipped only once; during a recess, the Duke of Duval was expansive and smiling as he explained to newsmen that the reports about his political influence were untrue: "You don't control votes," he said. Then a question, an innocuous one, annoyed him, and for just a moment the reporters saw the true face of George Parr. He "stopped short," one wrote. "His eyes seemed to pierce his glasses and his smile and hearty laughter" were replaced by what the reporter described as "a resolute expression."

After the recess, Parr returned to the attorneys' table, where he bent his gaze on Judge Broeter. But, despite Parr's presence, there was always a possibility of a miscarriage of the ducal brand of justice—always a possibility that the judge might rule for Stevenson and vacate the restraining order. Members of the county Democratic committee, including Adams and Poole, were in the courtroom, hoping to be allowed to look at last into Box 13. So Tarleton took no chances. He delayed as long as was necessary. And his tactics served their purpose. At 2:30 P.M., a newspaperman brought a wire-service bulletin into court. Reports conflict on its contents, but it appears to have stated that the canvassing subcommittee had reached Jim Wells County in its tabulations. It's "too late," Matthews told Judge Broeter. Dissolving the restraining order would no longer serve any purpose. "The case is moot and should be dismissed," he said, in disgust.

Broeter did not dismiss the case. "I



“A world that seems to be working right for a change.”

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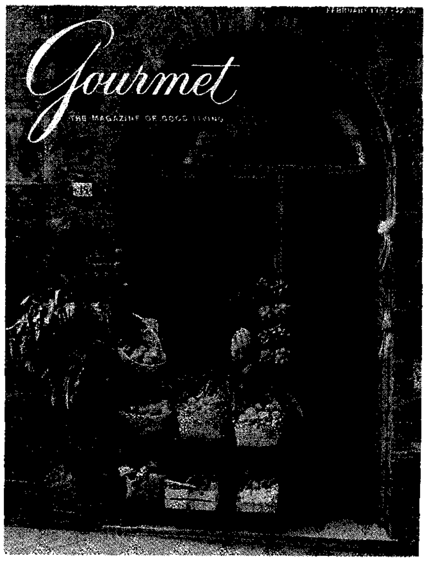
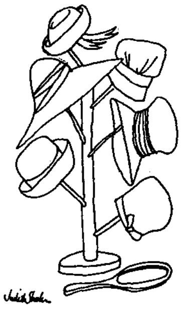


am not saying that there was fraud or that there was not fraud," the judge said. "If it so happens that our laws do not set out adequate means and speedy procedures to correct illegal acts I regret it," but "I can't make laws." At 3 P.M., a rumor swept the courtroom that the subcommittee was refusing to certify the Jim Wells returns, and was waiting to hear what the court ruling was. Broeter thereupon gave the ruling. It was in favor of Johnson. The judge said he did not see how granting Johnson's request for an injunction would "interfere in any way with an election contest." Therefore, he said, he was granting an injunction until such a contest was filed or until the present case was heard on its merits. Until that time, no change could be made in the Box 13 tabulations. The case "failed in the face of the power of George Parr," Matthews was to write in his memoirs. Delay had been Johnson's purpose, and that purpose had been served. When the subcommittee had reached Jim Wells, there had been no new certification for them to look at.



UP in Fort Worth, however, Lyndon Johnson now received a most unpleasant shock. His attorneys had assured him that in the absence of a new certification from Jim Wells County the canvassing subcommittee would have no choice but to accept the old one and send his name to the Executive Committee as the Party's senatorial nominee. But suddenly, without warning, the subcommittee was refusing to do so. When, with the county-by-county tabulation completed, Alvin Wirtz moved that the subcommittee certify Johnson's eighty-seven-vote majority, one of Stevenson's two representatives on the seven-member subcommittee, retired Major General Albert Sidney Johnson, objected. Declaring that the eighty-seven-vote majority included at least two hundred clearly illegal votes from Jim Wells County, he moved to amend Wirtz' motion. His amendment would certify the returns from two hundred and fifty-one counties—but not the Jim Wells returns. The "question of the correct and legal vote" of Jim Wells County should be submitted to the full Executive Committee, he said, and until that correct and legal vote was ascertained the county's votes should not be included in any tabulation.

Without those votes, Coke Stevenson was the Party's nominee. Lyndon Johnson jumped to his feet. Grabbing his sleeve, Wirtz pulled him down, and he and another of Johnson's attorneys, Charles I. Francis, made Johnson's argument, Francis almost screaming at the subcommittee chairman, W. B. Simmons, that, with a court injunction in force, "for this or any other committee to refuse to accept the vote as now certified would be violating that injunction." Simmons, however, ruled that the subcommittee could vote on General Johnson's amendment. Wirtz and Mrs. Holman voted against it, as did one of the subcommittee's neutral members, but the other neutral member voted with Stevenson's two representatives. With the vote tied, three to three, Simmons cast the deciding vote. It was for General Johnson's amendment, which thus carried, four votes to three, and became the subcommittee's majority report. Wirtz announced that he would make his motion a minority report, but that was what it was: a *minority* report. Lyndon Johnson had been confident that if only his attorneys could stall long enough down in Alice he would emerge from the subcommittee meeting bearing its imprimatur as the Party's nominee and with the two hundred indispensable votes from Jim Wells firmly certified as his. The stalling had worked, but not the rest of his strategy. He would be going into the crucial Executive Committee meeting with neither of those two advantages.

The vote had been taken at five o'clock. The meeting of the Executive Committee would begin at seven.

NOW everything hinged on the Executive Committee. Several alternatives were available to it. It could adopt its subcommittee's majority report, and conduct its own investigation of the Jim Wells returns. It could adopt the subcommittee's minority report, and name Lyndon Johnson the nominee. Or it could disregard both reports, and simply name a nominee: Johnson or Stevenson. Whatever the exact wording of the resolution on which it finally voted, the fifty-eight members of the committee present in Fort Worth would in reality simply be choosing between the two men who had fought so long for the nomination. And still, as seven o'clock neared, no one knew whom the committee would choose. Some committee members were still switching back and forth. Some, afraid of being caught on the losing side, were saying they would abstain, or were telling each side what it wanted to hear. George Brown asked his brother how it was going to go that night. His brother said he didn't know. All he knew, he said, was that it was going to be very close. Even as Ed Clark, weary from more than thirty-six consecutive hours of counting committee votes, was walking down to the ballroom for the meeting, he wasn't sure what the actual count was going to be. As he walked, he pulled out the rumpled sheet of paper on which he had been doing his figuring, and counted up votes for the last time. "I had it figured as a tie," he says.

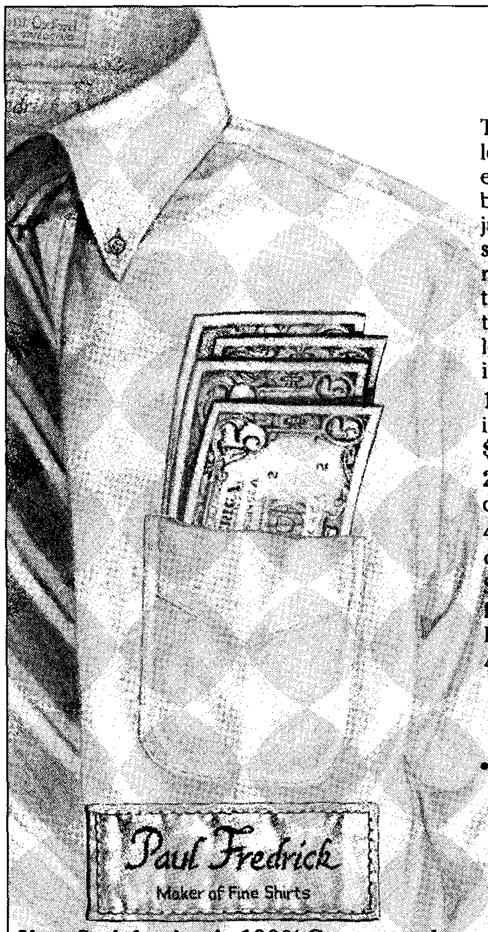
Spacious though it was, the Venetian Ballroom wasn't nearly spacious enough to hold all the politicians who wanted to be present. Every seat, of course, was taken—and, it seemed, every foot of floor space, too. The room was very hot; perspiration rolled down the faces of stout men with big cigars —by the time the meeting began, the ballroom seemed already filled with smoke—who were jammed so tightly together that they tried in vain to keep their expensive Stetsons from being crushed. Women members of the Executive Committee kept dabbing their faces with handkerchiefs that were already sodden.

"The whole atmosphere was tension," the man who presided at the meeting, State Democratic Chairman Robert Calvert, recalls. Some of the spectators were there simply out of a desire to be present at one of the most dramatic moments in Texas political history, but others—those who were adherents of Lyndon Johnson or Coke Stevenson out of ideology or personal affection or who had personal stakes in the outcome of the vote—had deeper interests. Standing in the ballroom that evening were J. J. (Jake) Pickle and Raymond Buck and Fred Korth and John Connally, men who had, some of them many years before, tied their fortunes to Lyndon Johnson's star. Those men would remember their feelings all their lives. "I was leaning up against a pillar in the back listening and trying to make tabulations but my heart was pounding so much that I could hardly write," Pickle recalls. "Because I knew what was involved."

Johnson had a lot of his men present; wavering committee members anxious to be with the winner might be swayed at the last moment by an impression as to who the winner was going to be. He was loudly cheered as he and his wife, Lady Bird, walked to the seats that had been saved for him by two of his men in the front row and sat down, facing the committee. He smiled until he felt the ovation had gone on long enough. Then he lifted his hand, palm out, and the cheers stopped as abruptly as if he had turned off a faucet. "Is Coke here?" spectators asked each other. Then the former Governor was noticed, sitting inconspicuously in the middle of the audience.

Stevenson's lead attorney, Clint Small, a former state district judge, focussed on what the Stevenson forces considered the main question: whether or not a single precinct—a boss-dominated precinct notorious for the "bloc" pattern of its voting—was to be the decisive factor in a statewide election. "The issue," Small said, "is whether or not Precinct 13 in Jim Wells County is to elect a United States senator." And, the attorney said, the issue was whether or not that single precinct was to elect a senator with votes that were patently illegal. Lyndon Johnson was "trying to get the office with votes of people who never appeared at the polls," he said. "Every name that appears after 841 has been placed there after the closing of the polls."

Small said he was prepared to prove this charge. Although access to the voting lists had been illegally denied, the names of some persons alleged to have voted had been taken down. Affidavits had been obtained from those persons. Johnson's claque was heckling and booing Small now, in an attempt to drown him out, but Small read aloud the affidavits, in which each of the "voters" swore he had not voted. As he finished reading one, he asked the Executive Committee, "Are you going to put a man in the United States Senate on that vote? . . . They cold-bloodedly added the . . . votes that are deciding this Senate race. Don't count votes put in four or five days after the ballots were counted." Yelling above the shouts of Johnson's claque, Small told the committee, "This [the Jim Wells] certificate reeks with corruption and



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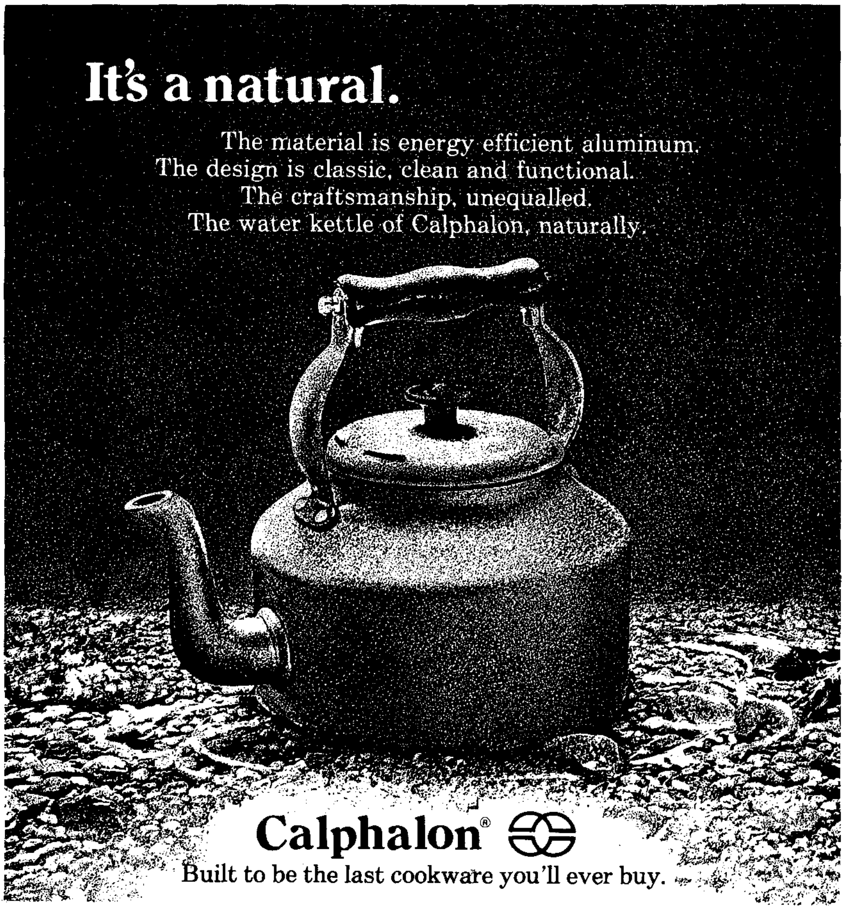

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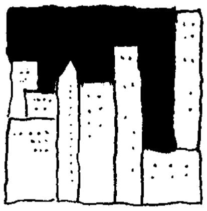
Opening the arguments for Johnson, John Cofer, one of the most renowned of the stem-winding, arm-waving school of courthouse lawyers, roared, "I believe in justice and right!" During his arguments, however—and those of Charles Francis and of Ed Lloyd, of the Duchy of Duval—it became apparent that their substance was, rather, that justice and right had no relevance to the work of the Executive Committee. Determining the legality of ballots, Johnson's lawyers said, in an argument that weighed heavily with many committee members, was the function of the state's District Courts; it was, in fact, Francis said, "contrary to law" for the committee to determine legality: under state law, the committee's sole function was to add up the voting totals sent in by the individual counties. "You are here [only] to count the votes!" Cofer shouted, pounding the air with both fists. "You may not be able to understand law, but, by the Holy Writ, you can count!" Turning to where Coke Stevenson sat puffing his pipe, Francis jabbed a finger at him and said, "Coke Stevenson, if you don't think those votes were fair and accurate, you can take Frank Hamer with his pistol and have your day in court. We'll meet you there. That is where the law says election contests should be held." To rebel yells, shouts of "Pour it on!" and applause from supporters, Johnson smiled, then waved his hand for quiet.



As for affidavits, Cofer said, he had affidavits, too. "Are you going to let Mr. Small wave an affidavit, and then let me wave one?" he asked. "Well, I can wave two for every one he can wave." He would not, however, do so at this time, he said, because the place for affidavits was in court. Furthermore, Small's affidavits were worthless, Johnson's attorneys said, because they had been obtained by intimidation and threats, during what Lloyd termed an "invasion" of his beloved Jim Wells County by "goon squads" that had terrorized innocent people. The "goon squads," Lloyd said, were Stevenson's lawyers and Frank Hamer; ignoring the fact that Hamer had not been present when any of the affidavits were obtained (he and Stevenson had been on their way back to Austin at the time), Cofer bellowed, "He [Stevenson] went down there [to Alice] with a man who had a gun on his hip and said to these people, 'Swear to this.' None of you would try a Negro on the basis of affidavits obtained by a policeman, with a gun on his hip." The remainder of the arguments by the three attorneys on the affidavits also had racial overtones. "You are not going to deprive him [Johnson] of his election on the affidavits obtained from a few Mexicans," Cofer said. "You just take a number, pick you a Mexican, and let him make an affidavit."

For three hours, the lawyers held forth in the sweltering, smoke-filled ballroom. Stevenson sat impassive. Johnson was hunched forward, one elbow resting on a knee, his face supported by his hand; his nervous fingers pinched and pulled the skin on his cheek, tore at the flesh around his fingernails. He was lighting one cigarette from the butt of another, and sometimes he bent over, sucking in the soothing smoke for a long minute. But only for a minute; then he would be hunched forward again, his eyes flickering around the room, watching everything, but mostly staring at the faces of the committee men and women, trying to guess his fate. The voting began at 9:48 P.M.

The vote was on a motion to adopt the minority report Wirtz had drafted in the subcommittee instead of adopting the subcommittee's majority report, so an "aye" vote would be a vote that the Executive Committee certify Johnson as the nominee; a "no" vote would, in effect, be for Stevenson's certification.

At the beginning, the votes were mostly for Stevenson, including several from Executive Committee members Johnson had believed favored him. Men who were watching Lyndon Johnson would never forget how he sat there, rigid and unmoving, appearing almost stunned, as the voting continued: "No." "No." "No." After thirty-one votes had been cast, Stevenson had twenty-one to his ten.

Then the tide changed, and vote after vote—including several that Johnson had believed would be for Stevenson—were for him. The vote was tied, and then tied again, this time at twenty-eight to twenty-eight, and then the last vote was called, and it was for Johnson. He had won, twenty-nine to twenty-eight. Pandemonium enveloped the ballroom; men pounded Lyndon Johnson on the back, women pushed through the crowd to hug and kiss him; cheers and rebel yells drowned out Chairman Calvert's attempts to gavel enough order out of the chaos to announce the vote. In the din, no one noticed for some minutes that a committee member, Mrs. Seth Dorbandt, who had voted for Johnson, was waving her arms and asking for the floor. Finally, as the noise was dying down in anticipation of Calvert's announcement, the chairman noticed Mrs. Dorbandt and gave her the floor. She withdrew her previous "aye" vote for Johnson, saying she wanted to be recorded as "present, but not voting." (She later told reporters, "I believed by changing my vote it would make a tie and force the decision into the courts, where I believe it rightfully belongs.") The vote was tied again. Spectators shouted to Calvert to call again the names of the five committee members who had been absent during the balloting. One after another, he called the names, and the first four, who had not come to Fort Worth, didn't answer. The fifth name was that of Charlie C. Gibson, of Amarillo. Knowing that Gibson was in Fort Worth, John Connally had been searching for him, and, moments earlier, had finally found him. In later years, when the story of the Executive Committee vote had come to be encrusted with myth, myths surrounded Gibson's absence during the voting. It was said he had been missing when his name was called either because he had a headache and had dozed off in another room or because he had gone to the bathroom, or because he had promised his vote to Johnson and now didn't want to be caught on the wrong side. Connally believes the last explanation. "He knew it was going to be close and he didn't want to vote," Connally says. Locating Gibson at last, Connally shouted, "Goddammit, Charlie, get out there and vote!" Just as Calvert was calling his name, Gibson burst into the room. "Aye!" he shouted. Johnson again led, twenty-nine to twenty-eight. At that moment, Lyndon Johnson thought fastest; in the instant of silence that followed Gibson's "aye"—before pandemonium could break loose again—he called to Calvert, "Announce the results now, Bob, before someone else changes his mind." Calvert did. Lyndon Johnson had won. The margin had been a single vote, but he had won.

THE full convention the next day, tumultuous though it was on the surface, and crucial though it was for Truman's chances of holding Texas, was an anticlimax in terms of realpolitik. The deal struck earlier between Wirtz and the Loyalists was consummated. Johnson's forces voted to seat not the States Rights delegation that had won in Houston in May but a Loyalist delegation from Houston—whereupon States Rights delegations from Dallas, Tarrant, and several smaller counties stalked out. Pro-Truman (and pro-Johnson) delegates swarmed into the Will Rogers Memorial Auditorium to take their places, thus giving the Loyalists overwhelming control of the convention. Johnson's aides "helped us on the seating," the Loyalist Robert Eckhardt

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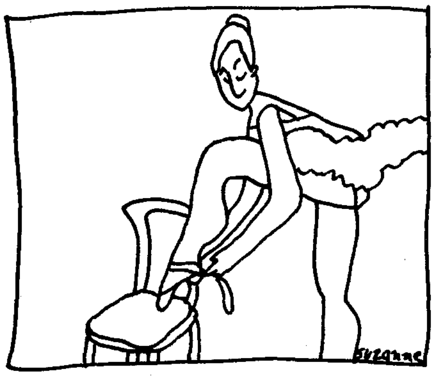
recalls. "In return, we took care of the Johnson crowd on the ballot boxes. We didn't open the boxes." The Loyalists voted to place on various Party committees—including the new Executive Committee and the canvassing committee of the convention as a whole—men and women who would oppose any investigation of the Jim Wells vote. That canvassing committee, on which Stevenson supporters had pinned their last hopes, was now, in the words of one observer, "a merry Johnson party." "It's stacked ninety-nine per cent against us," one Stevenson supporter said. A depressed Clint Small asked, "What good would a fight do now?" And, indeed, when the Executive Committee's minority report, which charged Johnson with "palpable fraud and irregularities," was presented to the convention's canvassing committee, it was ignored; one committee member moved to table it, another quipped, "Let's put it under the table," and there was general laughter. When, that evening, at the convention's closing session, Governor Beauford Jester tried to speak, he was interrupted by shouts of "We want Johnson!" A Party official read the Executive Committee's majority report —the one carried by the twenty-nine-to-twenty-eight vote—amid swelling applause. Then the permanent chairman, Tom Tyson, called for an "aye" and "no" vote on the report, and there was a thunder of "ayes." Then a roaring chant: "Johnson! Johnson!" The candidate and Lady Bird had been waiting in the wings, and they were escorted to the speaker's platform to a tremendous roar. He had had a hard fight, but he had won, he said. "This is the moment for which we have been waiting for one hundred weary days. . . . I am filled with so much gratitude towards my friends that there is no room for bitterness. The election is behind us. This is a great night for us. . . . To all of you, we say, we love our friends; we forgive our enemies." The next morning, the Johnsons rose early, left the Blackstone, were driven to the airport, and boarded a plane for the Gulf Coast, "to look on sand and water where there are no telephones." His aides, some of whom had been celebrating all night, were still celebrating. The morning's pro-Johnson newspapers exulted with them. The convention had been "a field day for Lyndon Johnson," the Houston *Post* said. "Hairbreadth Harry himself never experienced a more exciting run of adventures than those which brought to a hairbreadth, photo-finish climax the closest major political race in all Texas history.

"And," said the *Post*, "the most exciting thing about it all, from Mr. Johnson's viewpoint, was its happy ending."

Ending? The fight that had gone on so long had not ended at all.

In believing that the struggle with Coke Stevenson was now over, Lyndon Johnson and his aides—and Stevenson's aides as well—were not reckoning with the deepening sense of injustice the former Governor had come to feel, or with the implications of this feeling for a man with so fervent a belief in the law. Stevenson believed that an election had been stolen from him; that in itself was infuriating. But then, after he had set out to retrieve what had been stolen—after he had gone to Alice and obtained the evidence that he believed proved the theft —he had been told that, evidence notwithstanding, the law provided no recourse against the theft.

Stevenson had first sought justice from the people who knew the truth best, the Jim Wells Democratic Committee itself—and that committee had been willing to give him what he sought, to meet together and throw out the tainted ballots. But the law, in the form of the injunction Johnson obtained from a George Parr court, had prevented the committee from doing so. Then Stevenson had sought justice from his party at a higher level—from its Executive Committee—and the law had stopped him there, too, as Johnson's attorneys convinced the committee that investigating the votes was "contrary to the law." In that Executive Committee meeting, Charles Francis had told him, shouting, to his face, "You can . . . have your day in court. We'll meet you there," knowing even as he shouted that in the court to which he was referring—the State District Court—no effective action was possible before the case was made moot, and that no other state court would accept jurisdiction until after the District Court ruled.



After the twenty-nine-to-twenty-eight vote against him in the Executive Committee, Stevenson had still hoped that the full convention would deal with the "palpable fraud and irregularities"—and then had come the quip "Let's put it under the table," and the roar of laughter from the men with whom Johnson had stacked the convention. To Callan Graham, Stevenson's young attorney friend from Junction, that laughter was symbolic. "That whole week, it was like Lyndon was laughing at Coke," he says. "It was as if he was laughing in his face, and telling him that he was so smart that the law couldn't touch him. During neither of these proceedings, neither at the Executive Committee nor in the court, did Lyndon Johnson or his lawyers deny what we were saying. Their argument in both cases was that it didn't make any difference legally. They were just saying that, true or not, we couldn't do anything about it." And, indeed, when, after the convention, Stevenson met with his attorneys in his hotel suite, most of them told him the same thing.

And that was an argument that Coke Stevenson could not accept. He loved the law, which he had taught himself on his ranch, loved it as he loved his land, loved it with an intensity so deep it was almost religious, believed in its majesty, in its power to right a wrong. Now he had been told that the law was powerless to right the wrong that he felt had been done in this election. "For Coke, this just *couldn't* be true," his nephew, Robert Murphey, says, "because if that was true it would destroy something he had believed in all his life, something that was very important to him." Stevenson went out for a walk on the streets of Fort Worth, alone, and a reporter, encountering him, asked him if the long battle was now over. His big jaw came up. "Of course not," he said. "We're going to fight right on." And that night, while the convention was cheering Lyndon Johnson, and Johnson was celebrating and then sleeping

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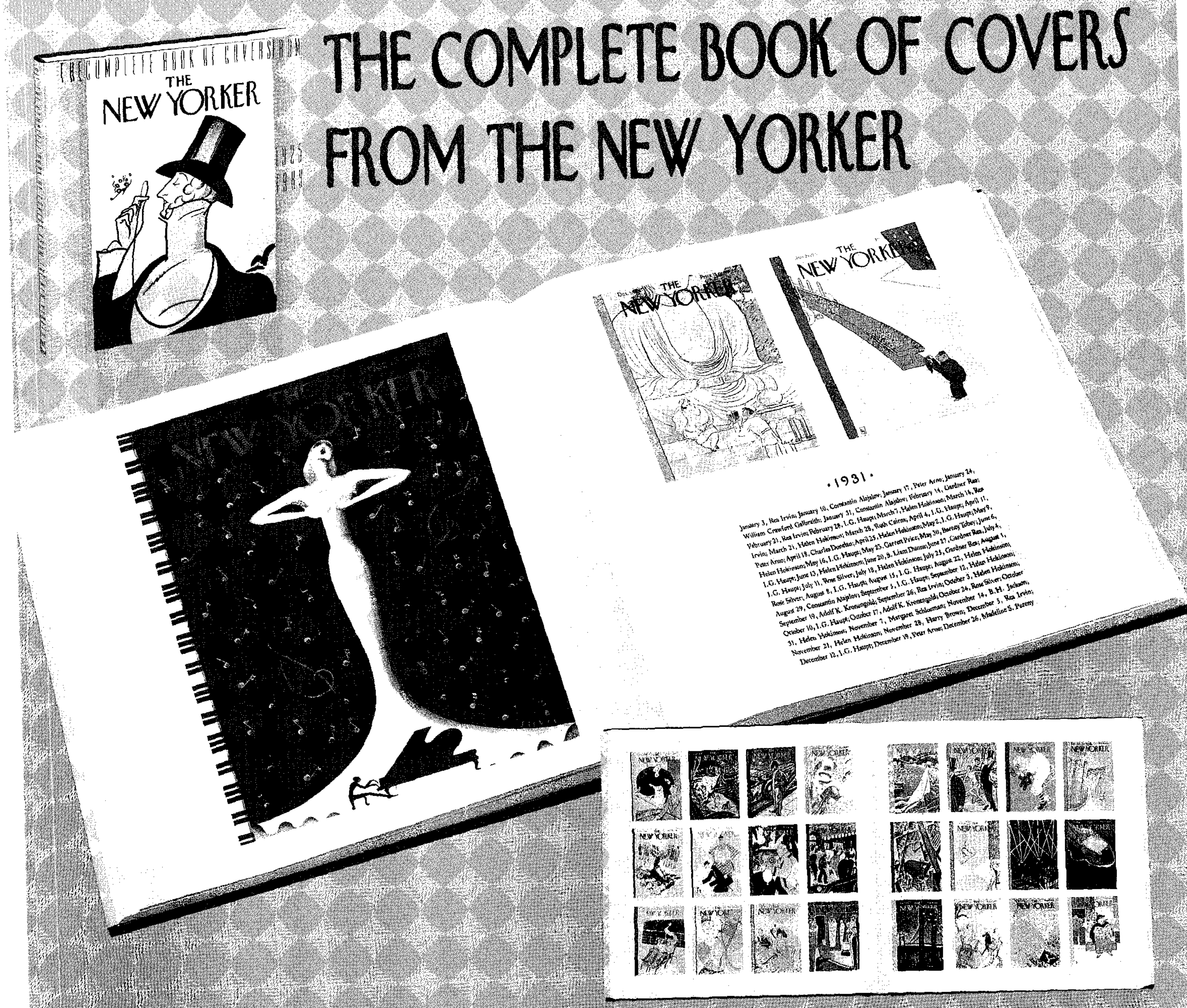

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"Can you describe this china shop?"

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and then flying off for a vacation, Coke Stevenson was fighting. He and Dan Moody, another former governor, who had volunteered to serve as one of his attorneys, met for a while and decided that since there was no help available in the state courts they would go to the federal courts. Moody said that because the primary involved a federal office Stevenson could sue under the federal civil-rights statute, on the ground that he had been denied a civil right—the right to have the votes in the primary counted honestly. He could ask for an injunction that would forbid the inclusion of Johnson's name on the November ballot pending a full hearing in Federal District Court, and, should that hearing show that Johnson had been elected by fraudulent votes, he could ask for an order placing his own name on it instead.

Moody was too tired that night to draw up the necessary petition for a restraining order himself, but there was that young attorney who had written the report that the canvassing committee so blithely ignored. Josh Groce was wakened in his hotel room by a telephone call. On the line was Coke Stevenson, whom he had never met, and Stevenson asked him to turn his report into a petition for an injunction. While Groce was doing this, Stevenson, with all his legal advisers gathered in his hotel room, discussed which of the three federal judges who sat on the United States District Court for the Northern District of Texas to present it to. There seemed no good choice. One of the three was irascible, erratic, a judge lawyers shied away from; the second was too much a "brass-collar Democrat," who would be eager to uphold the Party's Executive Committee; the third, former Lieutenant Governor T. Whitfield Davidson, was noted not only for his formality in a courtroom but as a "strict constitutionalist," who might be predisposed against permitting federal intervention in a state election. But Davidson, while a fervent Democrat (he had been one of Roosevelt's first prominent supporters in Texas), was also noted for his independence, and it was decided to present the petition to him.

It had to be presented to him fast—before Johnson's name went on the ballot. Connie C. Renfro, of Dallas, who was one of Stevenson's attorneys, telephoned Davidson's home and was told that the judge was vacationing on his sister's ranch, but no one seemed to know exactly where in Harrison—or perhaps Upshur—County the ranch was; Renfro, leaving Fort Worth at midnight, spent all night driving around East Texas. Dawn was breaking before he found it. Braving a rather fierce-looking watchdog, he found the tiny, white-haired judge already awake, brewing coffee—and learned that Davidson's insistence on the rules of court held firm even when the court was a ranch-house kitchen. The judge pulled a table into the middle of the room and sat at it as if behind a bench, had Renfro place a copy of the petition and proposed restraining order on it, studied them as Renfro read them aloud—and then, at 6:25 A.M. Wednesday, he signed the restraining order, setting the following Tuesday, September 21st, for the hearing on whether to harden the order into an injunction. Speeding back to Fort Worth, Renfro filed the order with the clerk of the Federal District Court. Even as Lyndon Johnson was in a plane en route to his vacation, believing he was on the ballot at last, state election officials were being ordered to keep the Democratic line blank, at least until the hearing. Coke Stevenson went for another walk. He looked happier than he had in days.

ON September 21st, assured by his legal team that his argument against federal intervention in a state election was strong and that Davidson would be predisposed toward it, Johnson strode into Federal District Court in Fort Worth, deeply tanned and wearing a broad, confident smile, at the head of a long line of lawyers. His hair was sleek and shiny with pomade. The dark blue of his suit's heavy, rich fabric was broken only by his Silver Star pin and by the precise points of a white handkerchief in his breast pocket. His white shirt was gleaming and starched. His necktie had a bright floral print. The pearl-gray Stetson in his hand was a 20X beaver. His wife was dressed as he liked her dressed, complete to the long feather curling up from her fashionable pillbox hat. The crowd in the oak-panelled, high-ceilinged courtroom was a political crowd: in the audience were Speaker of the Texas House W. O. Read and other prominent state officials; influential political insiders; political reporters; even one of the candidates defeated in the first primary, Cyclone Davis. At the attorneys' tables sat political stars, not only Alvin Wirtz and Clint Small but James V. Allred and Dan Moody: Allred, Moody, and Stevenson—three former governors of the state. As Johnson worked the crowded, noisy room, shaking hands, chatting in a relaxed manner, every inch the successful candidate, the scene seemed like a continuation of the convention that had so recently been held a few blocks away.

But this wasn't a convention but a courtroom, a courtroom very different from George Parr's courtroom in Alice. Just before Judge Davidson entered, a marshal told several men who had taken off their suit jackets to put them back on, and then he called out, "No smoking, gentlemen!" Coke Stevenson put out his pipe. Lyndon Johnson put out his cigarette. After the judge had taken the bench, "just radiating dignity in a quiet way," according to one observer, some of the attorneys—former governors and glittering political names—went on talking. "Now, gentlemen," the judge said. "I will ask you not to carry on any consultation in the courtroom. If it is necessary to direct attention to the next man, do it very quietly." The attorneys looked up at the judge, and sat down. The talking stopped. Whatever the outcome of Coke Stevenson's petition would be, that petition was going to be heard in a setting very different from any in which his battle with Lyndon Johnson had previously been waged: in the setting Stevenson loved—not a noisy, smoke-filled convention hall but a quiet, high-ceilinged courtroom, a court not of politics but of law.

And as soon as Moody began his opening argument, every trace of a smile was gone from Lyndon Johnson's face.

Moody's first sentences contained some news for Johnson. He said that Coke Stevenson was no longer charging election fraud merely in Jim Wells County; he was broadening his complaint. He was charging that fraud had also been committed in Zapata County. And he was broadening it still further—into the county whose vote totals had been perhaps the most indefensible of all. Fraud had been committed, Moody said, in Duval County. He was therefore no longer talking about two hundred votes, he said, but many more—thousands, in fact: "We expect to lay before this court testimony that will affect thousands of votes in this election." And, Moody said, he was prepared to prove what he was saying. "The ballot box in one of the precincts in Jim Wells County was, in

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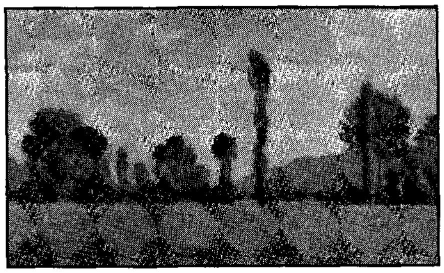

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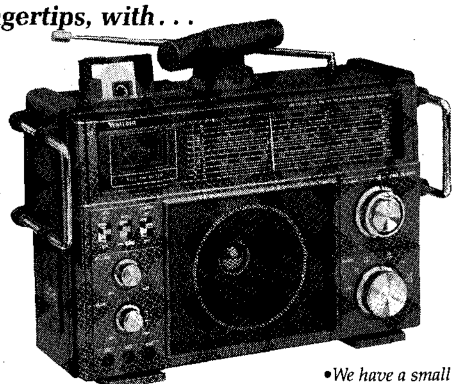

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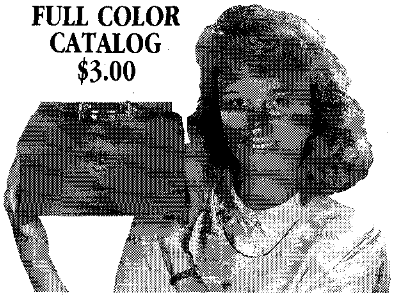

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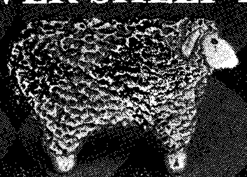

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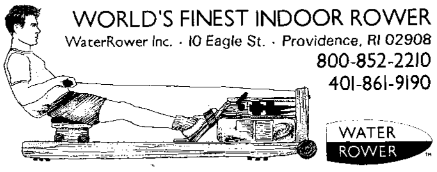

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what is known as common parlance, 'stuffed,'" he said. "That is to say, after the election had been held, and the votes counted, that additional votes were added." He had witnesses to prove it, he said. They had been brought to Fort Worth and were ready to testify; at that moment, Moody said, they were waiting in an office down the hall.

Johnson's attorneys argued, as they had earlier, that, whether Moody's statements were true or not, they didn't matter. Johnson had been defrauded of votes, too, they said—in Dallas County, in Brown County, and elsewhere. Any investigation of voting fraud in Texas would be "fatally defective" unless *all* voting fraud in Texas was investigated—"all of the irregularities, throughout the length and breadth of this great commonwealth," the attorney John Crooker said. And if all the illegal votes were thrown out Johnson would win by more than eighty-seven votes. They were prepared to argue the case on its merits, Crooker said, but not in this court: state court, and state court alone, was where this contest must be decided. And, he said, in terms designed to appeal to Davidson's "strict constitutional" views, "They are attempting to get the judge to extend the federal powers. . . . We stand here asking this court not to be a party to any further encroachment of the federal powers in Texas than has already occurred. . . . If there is anything more important than the purity of the ballot in Texas . . . we say it is the power of a sovereign state, that ought to be maintained." Crooker said that his side had not even made preparations for arguing the case on its merits in Davidson's court, so confident was he that Judge Davidson would admit that his court was without jurisdiction. "Respondent Lyndon Johnson appears at this time solely for the purpose" of asking that Stevenson's request for an injunction be dismissed, because federal court has no jurisdiction. That, Crooker said, is "the sole pleading now on file, and the sole purpose . . . of appearing here, because of our confidence that under the law this court has no jurisdiction."

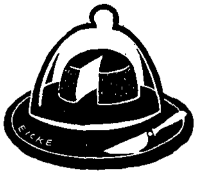
Moody, however, replied that those arguments did not apply to a civil-rights case. Stevenson's suit, he said, was being brought under a civil-rights statute that allowed a federal suit in cases in which an individual has been deprived, "under cover of state law or customs or usage," of rights "secured by the Constitution of the United States." Stevenson had been deprived of such rights, he insisted: "The Constitution provides [a man the] right to become a candidate [and] a right as a candidate and also as a voter . . . to have his vote honestly counted." The plaintiff, moreover, was not just a candidate. He was a voter. "He had a right, like a million other Texans, not to have his vote cancelled out by a vote put in the ballot box an hour or three days after the polls closed."

Moody argued also on broader grounds. "Under the law of Texas," he said, "there is no adequate remedy to correct such a wrong" as Stevenson had suffered. But did that mean that there should be no remedy *anywhere*? That someone could commit fraud and be immune from punishment for it? He did not believe that, he said. "I decline to believe that the courts of the United States are impotent to detect fraud and punish [it]." That was why the jurisdiction of this court had been invoked, he said. "The jurisdiction of the Court is invoked to prevent wrong." It was not merely Coke Stevenson who had been deprived of a federal right—a right guaranteed by the Constitution—by what had happened in the Valley during this election, Moody said; it was every voter who had voted honestly and had had his vote in effect cancelled by one put in the ballot box dishonestly. "Your Honor," he said, "I can sum up in a word the nature of [this] suit. While it is an action in equity in the Federal Court, essentially it is a crusade for honesty in the ballot box and for the protection of the people of this state from fraud in elections and from depriving the people of their honest choice in the election of a person to high office."

Then, before recessing court for lunch, Judge Davidson said a few words—and to the shock of Johnson's attorneys they did not seem to be the words of a judge who felt that he had no jurisdiction in the case or that the legal questions were as cut and dried as they had maintained. "The court wants to say one or two words off the record," he said. Wheeling around in his chair, he faced the two candidates and spoke directly to them, in a low voice that the spectators strained forward to hear. Under the present circumstances, the judge said, whoever won the nomination would win under a cloud—and that cloud would not go away. "Public sentiment will crystallize into anti-Stevenson and anti-Johnson sentiment. . . . You will have the feeling among some in Texas that the winner has won on a technicality." No matter who won, there would always be a shadow on his public career. Therefore, the judge said, he had a suggestion—"and it is only a suggestion, you understand, made off the record, and [it] will not influence my decision": arrange to have the Democratic State Executive Committee put both names on the general-election ballot and "let the people of Texas decide the winner."

Stevenson needed no time to decide whether he was willing to do as the judge suggested. "All smiles as the noon recess began," in the words of one reporter, he said, "Sure I'm for it. I'm willing to run it over." Pushing his way out of the courtroom, Johnson said, "No comment."

In a conference that noontime, Lyndon Johnson's ten attorneys advised him to accept Davidson's suggestion. It was hardly the suggestion, they pointed out, of a judge who doubted his jurisdiction, and although Davidson had made no direct statement, the tone of certain other remarks by the judge indicated that he was likely to rule against them on the jurisdiction issue. If he took jurisdiction, there would be a wide range of possibilities, and most of them—an investigation of the South Texas boxes, for example—would be quite ominous for their client. Indeed, even the present hearing was ominous: those witnesses were waiting just down the hall. What if Davidson allowed them to take the stand? What might they say? Accept the judge's suggestion—settle the injunctive suit with the compromise he suggested—and the hearing would be over. Recently, in explaining their recommendation that Johnson compromise, the only one of the attorneys who is still alive, Luther E. Jones, said simply, "The uncertainty of the legal processes: Who knew what was going to happen, particularly in a case as complicated as this? And, you know, lawyers like to compromise: any settlement is better than a lawsuit, that kind of thing." It was not inconceivable, the lawyers warned Johnson, that if Davidson held a full-scale trial on the issue Johnson's name would not be on the ballot at all. "The compromise that the judge has suggested here was that both go on the ballot, and the feeling was that in that case [Johnson] would win": in a general election, the state's conservative vote would be split between Stevenson and the Republican candidate.



The team of ten lawyers offering Lyndon Johnson this counsel—offering it unanimously—included not only former Governor (and former federal judge) Allred, not only Alvin Wirtz, Johnson's most trusted adviser, but also, in Crooker and Cofer and Tarleton and Looney, a quartet of the most renowned and respected lawyers in Texas. When they gave clients advice, the clients usually followed it.

Lyndon Johnson did not follow it. During the next few days of that September of 1948—those days of crisis—he displayed vividly many of the most striking qualities of his nature. One was the fierceness and determination with which he grabbed for political advantage—grabbed for it and, once he had it in his grasp, held on to it. He had the advantage now—he had the certification from his party—and agreeing to Davidson's compromise would mean relinquishing that certification, sharing it with the man from whom he had taken it. Another was an utter inability to feel that there was even a possibility that he had violated accepted standards of conduct and might be punished for that violation. But during this conference and during the following days Lyndon Johnson was also to display many of the qualities that made him a leader of men.

Among those qualities of leadership was a willingness to take responsibility for his own fate. This quality had been a constant in his career. No matter how strong the lure, he had never tied himself inextricably to anyone—not to Franklin Roosevelt or to Speaker of the House Sam Rayburn or to Herman Brown. If he had not put his trust in princes, he was certainly not going to put it in lawyers. He would make up his own mind. Another quality was decisiveness; he might delay for a long time studying a decision, but when the time came to make it he made it. And if he had to make it without study, if he

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had to make it fast, he made it fast. Finally, there was the sheer force of his personality—the dominance of Lyndon Johnson, face to face, over other men, even over ten other men, even over ten famous and respected men operating in the field (the law) of their expertise, not his. Lyndon Johnson might, as on this occasion, be leading men in a battle whose aims and methods would not bear scrutiny. But he would *lead*.

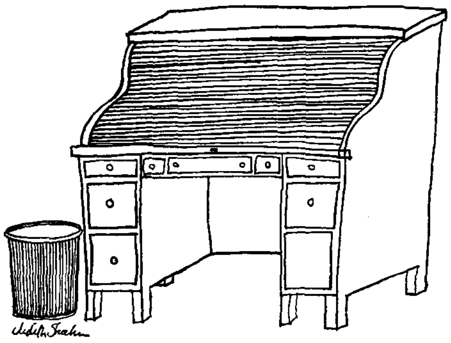
Having given him their unanimous expert advice, the lawyers sat back, expecting him to accept it. Instead, in the words of Luther Jones, "Lyndon just hit the goddamned ceiling." He was, Jones says, "truly angry." Part of his anger was directed at the judge, whom he cursed violently and viciously. "Maybe his temper was short because this thing was a nerve-racking ordeal, and it looked like that judge was going to take it away from him," Jones says. "He was outraged at this attempt to take his victory away from him. . . . It was just incredible that someone was doing this to him." And part of his anger was directed at *them*—at his lawyers. "He was very indignant" at their suggestion that he compromise, Jones recalls. "He said he had won the election, and he was not going to temporize; he was a citizen, and he had rights and he insisted on their being followed, and he didn't want to temporize *one bit*."

In Washington, where they had worked together for more than two years while Johnson was a congressman's assistant, Jones had shared not only a small office with Johnson but also a small bedroom. But that had been fourteen years earlier. Powerful though Johnson's personality had been then, Jones, who had seen him only infrequently during the intervening years, had never before witnessed what that personality had developed into with increased age, and with power, and with experience in command. Witnessing it now, he was awestruck. "Lawyers like to compromise. And the compromise that the judge had suggested here was that both go on the ballot, and the feeling was in that case he would win. The lawyers were suggesting that Lyndon accept that. And many men would have accepted that. But Lyndon was just angry. Red-faced anger. The wildest kind of anger. He was outraged at their suggestion and he told them so. 'This is a free country! I won it fair and square, and you want me to trade it away!' "

There was not a trace of hesitation or diffidence in the way he spoke to "the best legal brains in the state," Jones says. "Lyndon Johnson is a man of force and power, and, boy, he exhibited it all that day."

Under the force of that personality, all other considerations melted away. If other arguments were raised, Johnson dismissed them. He didn't want any discussion, he said—the discussion was over. "He just said, 'I instruct all of you to proceed accordingly.' " And, indeed, there was no further discussion. Lyndon Johnson got up from the conference table, towering over his attorneys, and strode out of the room. After court had reconvened that afternoon, and Moody had formally accepted, on Stevenson's behalf, Davidson's proposed compromise, Crooker read a statement the attorneys had drafted after Johnson left the conference room: "I received a majority of the votes. . . . I have a legal right to the nomination. . . . To voluntarily barter away that right would be to stultify myself and betray the Democratic Party." What one writer called "the fight to the political death in Judge Davidson's courtroom" resumed.

THE next day was worse for Johnson—for the next day was the day of the witnesses. Johnson's lawyers made a last, frantic attempt to keep them from being heard. John Cofer's voice was shaking as he pleaded with Davidson, on personal and political grounds, to dissolve his restraining order without taking evidence: Stevenson's suit was nothing but a delaying tactic, Cofer said, and the delay might keep the Democratic line on the senatorial ballot blank in November. "They would rather have a Republican elected than have Lyndon Johnson as United States senator!" he shouted. Pointing at Lyndon and Lady Bird, he said such a result "would be doing a great wrong, a terrible wrong, to that young man there who has served so ably his people of the Tenth District. It would be doing a great wrong to that little woman there who has helped him bear the burden of his statesmanship." But Moody pointed out that it was not Stevenson who had first taken the election results to a court, and thus begun the chain of events that were keeping the ballot blank. "It was the defendant Johnson himself who went to a district judge in Travis County to restrain the new officers of the Jim Wells committee from trying to see if the returns from that county were correct!" he said, shouting as if he were on the stump again. "They didn't want an investigation of the facts. The man who is right has nothing to fear and welcomes an investigation." Stevenson was not planning to present all his witnesses at this hearing, Moody said, only enough to demonstrate conclusively to the court that evidence was available that would show fraud widespread enough to change the outcome of the election. Allred jumped to his feet to reply, and for a moment the two former Governors stood shouting at each other, but Davidson cut them both short with a sharp rap of his gavel. And then the judge told Moody, "You may proceed with the evidence." At last, after three weeks of maneuvering, witnesses were going to begin to testify in public, under oath, about what had happened down there in the Valley.



Only thirteen of them testified that day, but that was enough. The thirteen included the Jim Wells Democratic officials Harry Lee Adams and E. M. Brownlee, and, with Josh Groce questioning them, both testified that George Parr's men had concealed the crucial poll list, and that there had indeed been changes on that list at the decisive point.

Q: Mr. Adams, did you notice any change in the ink at any particular point on that poll list?
A: Yes, I did.
Q: Where did that change appear?
A: With the number 842.

Groce introduced as evidence the list of names that Adams had scribbled—and suddenly another aspect of the list was a matter of court record: "I call to Your Honor's attention on this list copied from the poll list . . . that from 842 down [the names] run in alphabetical order."

And while Johnson's attorneys had

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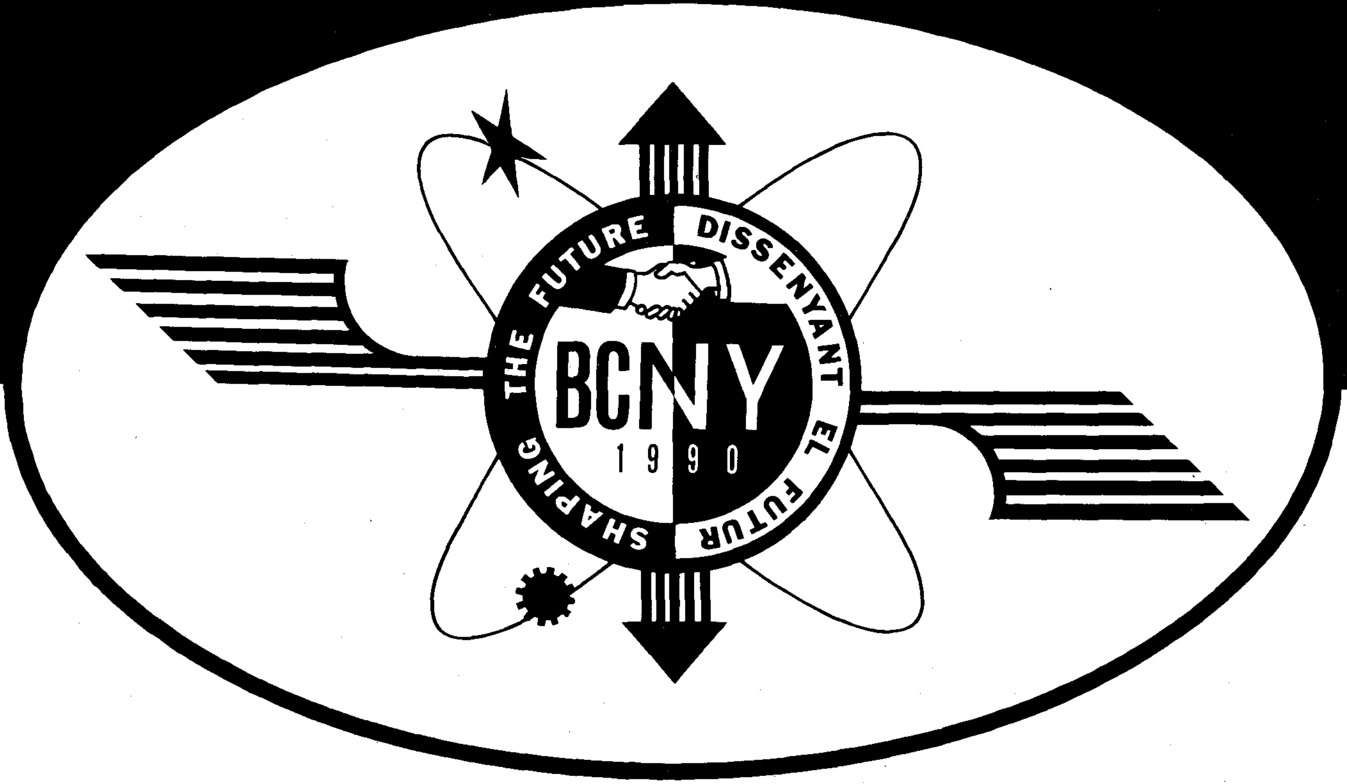
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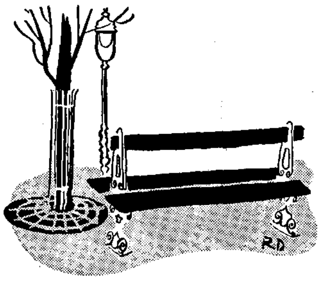
at least known that this particular evidence was coming, there was something new of which they had had no warning—and that came as a surprise to them. Groce had just asked James Gardner, one of the lawyers who had accompanied Stevenson and Frank Hamer to the bank, "Did you examine the poll list to see whether or not there was any changes?" Gardner said that he had, and that at the bank he had also got a look at a document no one else had seen—the certificate of the total vote—and had observed a change that no one else had mentioned. "The certificate showed that the vote for Lyndon Johnson was 965, but it was evident from looking at that 965 that the 9 had been changed. It previously had been a 7."



Three of Johnson's attorneys leaped to their feet as one, objecting. "That calls for an opinion and conclusion of the witness, highly objectionable!" Allred shouted. Davidson upheld him, but when Groce reworded the question ("Just describe . . . what you did see") Gardner said, "Where it had been a 7 there had been an additional loop added to the 7 to make a 9 out of it," and this time when the attorneys objected Davidson said, "I will hear it." That crucial loop was a matter of record, too.

But, most important, there were the voters—or, to be more precise, the alleged voters. On that day—Wednesday, September 22, 1948—for the first time in a court of law testimony was given under oath about whether those two hundred votes, the votes beginning with the number 842, that had given Lyndon Johnson his victory had actually been cast for Lyndon Johnson—or, indeed, for any candidate. And if the oratory of Johnson's lawyers and supporters had beclouded this issue for three weeks the terse answers of these witnesses cleared the air.

There was Hector Cerda, the student at Texas A. & I., who was listed on the poll list as Voter No. 920.

"Where were you on August 28, 1948?" Groce asked.

"At Pharr," Cerda replied.

Q: How far is that from Alice?
A: Approximately 109 miles, I believe.
Q: State whether or not you voted on that day?
A: I did not vote.
Q: You did not?
A: I did not vote, no, sir.

There was Louis Salinas, listed as Voter No. 911.

"Did you vote in the August 28th primary of this year?"

"No."

There was Juan Martinez, listed as Voter No. 891.

"State whether or not you voted in the August primary, on August 28th."

"No."

There was an affidavit from Olivero Herrera, listed as Voter No. 881.

"I did not vote."

There was an affidavit from Eugenio Soliz, Voter No. 841, stating that he had arrived at Precinct 13 at about six-forty, and that "there was no one else coming up to vote"; therefore, he would have been the last person to have actually voted. And now one of the witnesses was Enriqueta Acero, listed as Voter No. 842, which would have made her the voter after Soliz, and she testified that *she* had not voted.

There was further testimony. During the three weeks of controversy ever since the 965 Johnson votes in Precinct 13 were reported, Johnson and his partisans had continuously argued that the Johnson vote in Precinct 13 had always been 965, that it had never been changed, that no one had ever said it was 765—that the election judge, Luis Salas, had reported it as 965 on Election Night, and the report had simply been garbled in transmission to the Election Bureau. Now there was a surprise witness. "Call Charles Wesley Price," the court attendant said, and Johnson's attorneys looked around to see who he was. Price, a twenty-five-year-old resident of Alice, testified that he had been present at the offices of the Alice *News* at about eight o'clock on the night of August 28th. At that time, Price said, "Luis Salas . . . brought the returns in from Precinct 13" so that a *News* reporter, Cliff DuBose, could telephone them in to the Election Bureau.

"Did you hear [Salas] announce the vote?" Groce asked.

"I heard him tell Cliff DuBose," Price replied.

"What vote did he announce?"

Allred jumped to his feet ("Clearly hearsay"), and Davidson upheld the objection, but it was obvious what Price was going to say—and would say if the investigation continued and testimony was allowed on this point. The truth or falseness of Johnson's claim that Salas had originally reported 965 votes for him could be determined, because Price—and DuBose as well—had heard the original report.

And there were witnesses not only from Jim Wells County but from Zapata County, whose revised final vote had been 669 for Johnson to 71 for Stevenson, and these witnesses testified that in Zapata, too, votes had been added for Johnson. As for Duval County, if Davidson agreed to hear the case on its merits evidence would be available from that county, too, Moody promised (although Moody was also to point out that returns of 4,622 to 40—more than a hundred to one—might be considered fraud "upon their face"). "Sufficient illegal votes have already been proved in this hearing to have changed the result" of the primary, Moody said, and there were many other counties, too, whose returns were "loaded with fraudulent votes." Lyndon Johnson had not really won the primary, Moody said. His alleged victory was composed of thousands of "votes" that had never been cast.

When Davidson had ruled that the witnesses would be heard, Lyndon Johnson's self-assurance had visibly begun to drain away. His wife, despite her jaunty hat, was, in one description, "even glummer than he was." During the testimony, Johnson kept darting hasty glances at Stevenson; Stevenson never looked his way. During recess, Stevenson, returning from the bathroom, encountered Johnson in the corridor outside the courtroom. "Howdy," Johnson said, assaying friendliness. Stevenson returned the greeting by briefly raising his hand; he did not reply.

And while the witnesses' words cut through Lyndon Johnson's arguments there were also words that day from the judge—which cut deeper. Davidson's ruling on the case contained at least a touch of indignation at Johnson's conduct in it. If Stevenson's "allegations be true, then the complainant has been wronged," Davidson said. "He has had a nomination for a seat in the Senate of the United States taken away from him. [If] enough ballots were stuffed to have changed the result . . . manifestly, that is a wrong." And Johnson had presented not "one word of evidence" to refute Stevenson's charges. Indeed, not only had he refused to present evidence himself but he had effectively prevented anyone else from presenting it—or even from obtaining it—by securing that earlier injunction in a state court. Coke Stevenson had been entitled to see the poll and tally lists, the judge said, to determine the truth about the change in the Jim Wells vote. "It was the right and privilege of anyone interested in the vote to try to inform himself about that change which came quite late." Lyndon Johnson had prevented Stevenson from doing so, with that earlier injunction. "The effect of that was to . . . prevent the new county chairman and . . . Coke Stevenson . . . from making an examination [of the lists]." They had finally managed to obtain a glimpse of the lists, but they had been stopped from making a copy—"They haven't been allowed to do so . . . yet." The very fact that the lists had been concealed made it more likely that a wrong had been committed, the judge said. The concealing of the lists "throws such a cloud on the fairness of the election that we think it should be gone into, and that the parties concealing this information must have been conscious of the fact that it would probably change the result of the election."

Then Davidson moved beyond the narrow specifics of the case to discuss what he felt were more basic issues. And when he did the words he spoke were words that Coke Stevenson had been waiting to hear for a long time—because the terms in which Judge Davidson discussed the case were terms that lifted law above legalisms. As he spoke, in a soft, calm voice, the shouting and the vocabulary of politics which had clouded the case seemed at last to fade away—to be replaced by what Davidson considered the issues of justice, of equity, of *right*, that the law was supposed to signify.

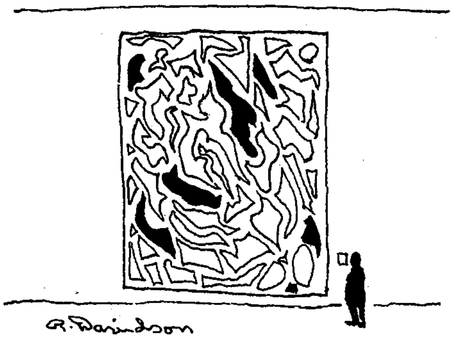
Lyndon Johnson's contention, the judge said, was that, whether or not Coke Stevenson had been wronged, the law was powerless to right that wrong. And with that contention, the judge said, he did not agree. "A sound principle of right [is] that there must never arise a wrong for which there is not a tribunal wherein there is a remedy," he said. "That is in fact the spirit of equity that has come down to us through the ages." The defendant, Lyndon Johnson, "admits there is no remedy. His counsel says, 'What can you do about it? We have no remedy [in law].' That is why the plaintiff is here—in this court." And "here we are admitting that he has been wronged and laughing at him in his face, as it were, because he has no right. . . . If there was no statute on the books, this complainant should still have an equitable hearing in this court. He comes to a United States court, complaining that he has been deprived of a right. . . . And it is admitted by both parties that a right to determine that nomination exists nowhere if not in this court."

Of course the case fell under the federal civil-rights statute, Davidson said. "Whenever I steal, whenever I misappropriate, whenever I stuff a ballot box, we are taking from a man that which is his. We are not only taking from him that which is his but we are depriving other voters of their right to choose, by offsetting the vote they cast." And he was going to find out the facts in the case. "In cases of fraud," the judge said, "the rule is—throw open the doors and let the light in." For that reason, he said, he was not voiding his restraining order but instead elevating it into a preliminary injunction that kept Johnson's name off the ballot. And, he said, he was going to institute an investigation to determine if Johnson's name belonged there at all. The court "would like to see further the facts concerning Box 13 in Jim Wells County, also Duval County and Zapata County." He was therefore appointing masters in chancery—special officers of the court with full power to subpoena witnesses and evidence—to hold hearings in the three counties and submit written reports to him by October 2nd, the day before the deadline for placing names on the ballot. After seeing those reports, he would rule on whether the injunction should be made permanent. And in interviews with reporters to explain his decision the judge added an additional note, which Lyndon Johnson may, if possible, have found even less cheering than those which had preceded it. A trial might be necessary to determine if the injunction should be made permanent, the judge said. The masters' "investigation is a preparation for trial." The trial would be on "the issue of fraud. If this fails of proof, then Lyndon Johnson is the United States senatorial nominee, and he will move into the position with a clean bill of health. If he does not . . ." At this point, one reporter wrote, "The judge paused, as if searching for words, then he spread his hands and shrugged."

Johnson's attorneys repeated their now familiar argument that there had been fraud in many counties besides the three that Stevenson was naming. "We are unwilling to try an election on the Jim Wells County vote," Cofer said. "There are other counties we would like investigated if there were time"—Brown County, for example, and Galveston, and possibly Dallas.

Davidson called their bluff. "I will be glad to appoint masters to investigate any counties" the attorneys named, the judge said.

Allred declined the offer. "We're not in a position to give time to this thing in the next few days," he said. He said that the time of Johnson's attorneys would be taken up perfecting an appeal to a higher court. Davidson agreed to facilitate matters by granting Johnson's attorneys permission to proceed with the appeal of the injunction while the investigation was going forward. But, the judge emphasized, it *was* going forward: "The case on the facts will proceed."

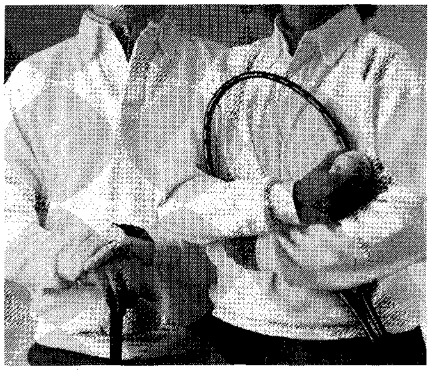


LYNDON JOHNSON had worn another wide, bright-colored necktie to court that day, but by the time the judge had finished speaking the face above the gay floral pattern was the face of a man confronted by the imminent death of his hopes and dreams. Beside him, Lady Bird seemed stunned. For weeks now, in court and convention, he had been fighting to have his name placed on the ballot as the Democratic nominee for senator. But now, on September 22nd, the Democratic line was still blank; Texas election officials had already sent the state printers the sample ballot from which individual counties would print up their ballots, and this was a sample ballot that was, as the Associated Press put it, "unique in Texas political history because it includes no Democratic nominee for U.S. Senator." The Republican nominee, Jack Porter, was listed; the space for the Democratic nominee was empty. October 3rd was the legal deadline for placing a name on the final ballots that would be used by voters on Election Day. If Johnson's name wasn't on the ballot by October 3rd, it would never be on it. Since Davidson had ordered his masters in chancery to report to him by October 2nd, theoretically the judge would be able to dissolve the injunction in time for a candidate's name to be included. But realistically this was little comfort to the Johnson camp now that they had heard the witnesses, for should the masters' investigation confirm their testimony, it seemed all too likely that if Davidson did order a name to be placed on the Democratic line the name would not be Johnson's. Ever since the additional votes from Precinct 13 were reported, on September 3rd, banner headlines in Texas newspapers had linked Johnson's name with victory, as he won in the Election Bureau tabulation, won in state court, won in the Democratic Convention. Now, in the headlines announcing Davidson's decision, it was no longer "JOHNSON WINS." It was "JOHNSON LOSES COURT FIGHT" and "JOHNSON LOSES COURT DISMISSAL PLEA"—"JOHNSON LOSES." And it was "COKE WINS PLEA TO BAR JOHNSON" and "STEVENSON WINS RULING BY U.S. COURT"—"STEVENSON WINS." In the opinion of many men in both camps, the headlines were an accurate summary of the situation. Ernest Boyett, Stevenson's executive assistant, recalls, "When Davidson handed down his ruling, we thought we had won."

MEETING that evening with his ten attorneys (now, in this emergency, supplemented by others) in a large conference room at the Texas Hotel, Lyndon Johnson was confronting, in what the Austin *American-Statesman* called "the greatest political controversy of all time in Texas," a legal situation so unprecedented and so tangled—and with so wide a range of possible outcomes—that, as the Associated Press reported, "in the midst of the confusion and present uncertainty . . . the best legal sources were unwilling to comment on what might happen." As Mary Kahl was to write, "since there was no parallel or precedent even in the politically bizarre state of Texas, no one knew what would happen in the Senate race" if by October 3rd Davidson had not permitted Johnson's name to appear on the ballot. And the longer Johnson's attorneys discussed the crisis, the more daunting it appeared. For what, after all, were his options? A write-in campaign? That was an unattractive alternative. He might lose such a campaign to Stevenson. Moreover, far fewer voters would take the trouble to turn out on Election Day and write in a candidate's name than would vote for a name on the ballot. If Stevenson, too, was not on the ballot, the overall Democratic vote would be much smaller than usual, and Johnson would be dividing a write-in vote with Stevenson; even if he should defeat Stevenson, there was no certainty that in these circumstances he could defeat the Republican candidate.

Appealing Davidson's injunction to a higher court was a possibility, of course, and on appeal the injunction might well be overturned. But it was hard to conceive that this one could be overturned in time to get him on the ballot. Any appeal, his lawyers explained, would have to be heard first by the United States Court of Appeals for the Fifth Judicial Circuit, of which Davidson's court was a unit, and the Court of Appeals was not scheduled to convene until October 4th, the day after the deadline. Even if they managed to persuade a single circuit judge, sitting alone, to stay the injunction—an unlikely event—Stevenson could then appeal that stay to the United States Supreme Court, whose fall term also began on October 4th.

Johnson could do what he had been threatening for weeks to do: demand an investigation of other counties besides Jim Wells, Zapata, and Duval. He could even demand a statewide recount. Davidson had indicated a will-



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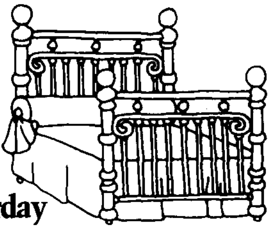

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"Oh, nothing. How about you?"

• •

ingness to grant such demands. Those demands, however, might be unwise for many reasons—including the possibility that investigation might reveal as fraudulent more of his votes than Stevenson's. Moreover—the most brutal fact—the wisdom or folly of such a course was beside the point now. It might have been feasible in the last week of August, when the primary was held. It was not feasible in the last week of September. A widespread investigation or a recount could certainly not be completed by October 3rd. There was no time.

Another aspect of the situation had also to be considered.

Under Davidson's order, ballot boxes—including Box 13 from Jim Wells County—were going to be opened. Lyndon Johnson had been trying for weeks to keep those boxes from being opened. He had, through George Parr's court, stopped the county committee from opening them. He had, through his deal with the Loyalists at the convention, stopped the state committee from opening them. But they were going to be opened now.

Who could predict the ultimate result of that? The brief glimpse of the Box 13 poll list that the Alice reformers had snatched, supplemented by the testimony of a few witnesses, made it difficult to doubt that fraud had occurred in that precinct. What might be the result of a full inspection of the list, combined with the unlocking of the precinct ballot box (which allegedly contained, after all, not merely two hundred but nine hundred and sixty-five votes marked for Lyndon Johnson)? And Box 13 was only one precinct. What would be the result of the federal masters' unlocking all the ballot boxes in Zapata County—and in Duval County, where 4,679 poll taxes had been paid and 4,662 had allegedly gone to the polls, and 4,622 of them had allegedly cast ballots for Lyndon Johnson? What would be the result of the masters' examining all those poll lists? What would be the result of their taking testimony from not just thirteen but scores of witnesses? Dan Moody had already promised "testimony that will affect thousands of votes." What if he could keep that promise? What if the definitive, no-longer-deniable word "fraud" was successfully applied to Precinct 13 and to other precincts—and the truth about the Valley's vote for Lyndon Johnson was no longer a rumor but a fact? What would be the effect on his reputation? There had as yet been no public hint that Lyndon Johnson had participated personally in the obtaining of fraudulent votes that might have given him his victory, and perhaps no such hint would ever surface. But the votes would be linked with his name in the press. How could they not be? They had been cast for *him*. If scores of ballot boxes were opened and scores of poll lists examined—and if, as Moody promised, thousands of fraudulent votes were found—would the public believe that such wholesale stealing of votes had been carried on without his knowledge? The implications reached beyond the state, as even pro-Johnson newspapers could not avoid pointing out. The Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* said that the very "filing of the suit that alleges irregularities . . . may also be the grounds for 'black marking' Johnson in such a way that the U.S. Senate would not seat him even if all court action fails." And the investigation's implications reached also into the future—his future. Whatever its results, a full investigation could hardly fail to tarnish his name permanently—to link it indelibly with the greatest election scandal in Texas history. His seat in Congress was already gone. And Johnson was in imminent danger of having his reputation tarnished so badly that even if he were to desire another political post—appointive or elective—he might not be able to get it. He was in danger of going through the rest of his life identified in the minds of the people of his state with Box 13. And as he met with his lawyers that evening Lyndon Johnson realized that not one of them knew what to do.

THE solution to both his problems—getting on the ballot and stopping the investigation—was the same: Judge Davidson's injunction must be overturned, and fast. October 3rd might be fast enough on the legal front, for a dissolution of the injunction by that date might allow his name to be placed on the ballot, but in the court of public opinion the verdict might already be in by that date: witnesses would have been heard, poll lists checked, ballot boxes opened—and conclusions drawn by the federal masters in official, public reports. Short as was the time before October 3rd, it was too long if he wanted to avoid the ineradicable "black marking" that the *Star-Telegram* had mentioned.

But none of the roomful of attorneys could think of any way to get the injunction overturned and the investigation stopped any sooner. "The rules were perhaps less clear than you might think," Luther E. Jones recalls. The lawyers went off separately and wrote drafts of an appeal. The greatest lawyers in Texas—"Allred wrote one, Johnny Crooker wrote one . . . Everett Looney wrote one." Then they came back and discussed them. There was no agreement either on the broad ground for the appeal or on the specific arguments to be used. They couldn't even agree on the court to which the appeal should be made: some wanted to argue again before Judge Davidson, some to go directly to the United States Supreme Court. "Day moved on, and night came, and . . . it was late at night, and they still had not agreed on the opposition paper."

Exacerbating the problem were the fame and the reputation of the attorneys involved. "These were talented lawyers, but each of them was famous in his own right, and each of them had to tell stories—about his great courtroom triumphs, etc.," Jones says. "Antecedent to making effort, they had to reminisce, and the reminiscing was just awful, really, because it stopped the work."

The attorneys laughed and chatted—and as they did time was running out on Lyndon Johnson's last chance. After hours of discussion, still "nobody could agree on how to do it." Jones saw that "Mr. Johnson was getting impatient to a degree that's hard to describe, because they were not producing the thing that was needed." The crisis facing Lyndon Johnson could not be solved by Johnson's own genius, for that genius was political. It could be solved only by legal expertise. He had assembled a roomful of legal experts, some of the greatest legal experts in Texas. And none of them were helping him.

In this crisis, Lyndon Johnson responded with a vivid and dramatic demonstration of other qualities of leadership that he possessed. One was an ability to think—fast and clearly—under intense pressure; to see, in a tense and tangled crisis, what was needed to solve it. Another was his genius not only in choosing men but in using them for his purposes. To him, every man was a tool, and in difficulty he reached unerringly for the right tool. Now, facing a Gordian knot of seemingly indissoluble legal complications, Lyndon Johnson reached for his sharpest tool of all. As the roomful of renowned lawyers went on arguing, he asked Alvin Wirtz, "Where's Abe?"

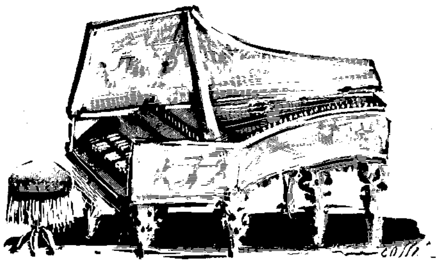
Wirtz telephoned the Washington office of Abe Fortas, once called "the most brilliant legal mind ever to come out of the Yale Law School," and now, at thirty-eight, in private practice after a meteoric career in New Deal agencies, rapidly earning a similar reputation in Washington. By coincidence, a very lucky coincidence, Fortas was at that moment in nearby Dallas, taking depositions in an antitrust case. He was not at his hotel, though, and no one knew where to find him. Johnson telephoned the department-store owner Stanley Marcus. "Do you know where in hell I can put my hands on Abe Fortas?" he asked. "He's right here," Marcus replied. Fortas immediately flew to Fort Worth.

When he walked into the big conference room, Fortas was to recall, "it seemed to me that there were acres of lawyers," who were, it seemed, "having a great deal of controversy as to the next step to be taken."

Another of the qualities that made Lyndon Johnson a leader—the quality of his perhaps most admired by his Texas associates—was a toughness of mind: under intense pressure the self-pity and hysteria fell away, to be replaced by whatever was needed.

Explaining the problem to Fortas, the lawyers started talking all at once, interrupting each other. Johnson made them speak one at a time. All the time they were talking, with Fortas occasionally interjecting a question, Lyndon Johnson said not a word. When the lawyers had finished, Fortas recalled, "I said what I thought should be done."

His suggestion entailed an immense gamble. Lyndon Johnson's only chance of overturning Judge Davidson's injunction lay in the Circuit Court of Appeals or the Supreme Court. The discussions in which the other lawyers had been participating that evening had been based on the assumption that in attempting to overturn the injunction Lyndon Johnson would naturally use every chance he had. Abe Fortas was suggesting that Johnson not do that. He was, in fact, suggesting that Johnson deliberately throw away every chance but one—and risk everything on a single hearing before a single judge.



In the view of most of the attorneys in the conference room, the best legal chance of overturning the injunction was in hearings before the full Circuit Court, and then, if Johnson lost there, in a further appeal to the Supreme Court. Though neither court convened for its fall term until October 4th, they hoped that if the injunction was overturned some legal means would then be found of putting Johnson on the ballot. During those long hours of shouted conferences, Jones recalls, "dozens" of such means had been suggested.

Fortas' calm voice, pragmatic and precise, cut through those arguments. They were unrealistic, he said. There was no time for hoping now: if they won before a full court, additional court actions—additional hearings, additional delays—would be required to obtain the legal orders to get Johnson on the ballot, with Election Day itself always coming closer. And at every stage Coke Stevenson could himself appeal. Fortas said later that he had been "confident" that in a hearing before a full court Johnson would win. "This was alleged fraud, which in these circumstances was a state matter," he recalled. "The federal judge enjoining the state election" had no authority to do so. But, Fortas said, what good would that victory do? Victory before a full court meant defeat in the election.

Then Fortas turned to another legal avenue—bringing the appeal before a single judge—and now his reasoning was more complex.

Since a single Circuit Court judge could stay a lower court's injunction if that injunction would make ineffective a later judgment of the full court, most of Johnson's lawyers had been recommending making the strongest possible argument to a Circuit Court judge whose "strict constructionist" views and previous record made likely a favorable ruling. Fortas said that this course, too, would be unwise. Since the sole issue would be jurisdiction—whether Davidson had been correct in taking authority over the case—making such a plea to a single judge would smack too strongly of lawyers' simply asking one judge to overrule another. No matter how persuasive their plea, he said, a judge sitting alone would be far more likely to deny it than the full Circuit Court. In any case, the judge would almost certainly want to consider the issue for several days, to "take it under advisement," and should his ruling then prove unfavorable no time for taking another course of action might remain before the October 3rd deadline. Even if he granted the stay, too many days of consideration would, while giving Johnson a legal victory, doom his chances of being on the ballot. Fortas felt confident that the jurisdictional grounds would persuade a single Supreme Court Justice—particularly the Justice with administrative responsibility for the Fifth Circuit, Hugo Black—to do what a single Circuit Court judge would not: grant their plea for a stay of the injunction, and thereby allow Johnson's name to go on the ballot. Getting the case before Black, however, represented a considerable problem. The Circuit Court route could not be bypassed entirely, since a Supreme Court Justice would be unlikely to hear a case alone until lower-court avenues of appeal had been exhausted. "The problem was to get it up there in time in a way that would not result in a dismissal of it because it had not been passed on by the lower court," Fortas explained. "It would have been a mistake to go directly to the Supreme Court, to Justice Black, and bypass the [Circuit] Court of Appeals." But if they took the case to the Circuit Court—to a single judge of that court—the case might be delayed there until it was too late for a ruling by Justice Black to help. "A way had to be devised in getting a very quick hearing from the Court of Appeals," Fortas said.

Fortas told the assembled attorneys that he had thought of a way—a very risky way. In the first place, he said, no affirmative action at all should be asked from the single Circuit Court judge: that would complicate the matter and make a delay in the judge's decision more likely. The only relief asked should be for a simple stay of the injunction on jurisdictional grounds—the issue on which a single judge would be most unlikely to overrule a fellow-judge; the issue, in other words, on which a ruling unfavorable to their side was most likely. Then, Fortas said, they should try to make an unfavorable ruling even more likely by presenting to the judge not a strong argument, detailed, full, and persuasive, but a weak one—a plea offered in what Fortas called "a summary way," a way that was not particularly convincing. And, to further insure an unfavorable ruling, they should try to select as the single judge not, as the other lawyers had been suggesting, a judge who seemed predisposed to rule for their client but, rather, a judge seemingly predisposed to rule against him. The combination of those steps, Fortas said, was the best way of obtaining a quick decision from a Circuit Court judge: a decision that would be unfavorable but would be fast—fast enough to allow Johnson's lawyers then to present his case to Justice Black, and to be able to tell Black that the case had already been appealed (and had lost) in Circuit Court. Before Fortas arrived, Johnson's roomful of attorneys had been trying to decide what was the strongest case they could present to a Circuit Court judge. Fortas was suggesting they present to that judge not the strongest case but the weakest. Under his plan, the object was not to try to win in Circuit Court but to lose—fast. Lyndon Johnson had two forums in which he might win an appeal from Davidson's decision—the full Circuit Court and then, if unsuccessful there, the Supreme Court. Abe Fortas was suggesting that he rely on only one, that, in fact, the first forum be surrendered—by deliberately losing in Circuit Court. He was suggesting that everything be staked on the gamble that Black would agree to hear the case as a single Justice—and that Black would, after hearing it, rule for them.

Deciding whether to adopt his plan was not, Fortas said later, "particularly difficult" on the "legal aspects" of the case. "What that [decision] mostly required was courage," he said. "A man's political life was at stake." His suggestion, he was to recall, "was not a conventional course of action. Lawyers like to do things by the book—'B' comes after 'A'—and here we are skipping right through to 'Z.'" Moreover, the dangers involved in his plan were, he conceded, "tremendous." By forgoing the chance to have the Circuit

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Court rule, Johnson would be gambling everything on Black. "You're doing a one-shot instead," Fortas said, and if you lose on that shot "you lose everything." But Lyndon Johnson's sharpest weapon had sliced its way through the other lawyers' verbiage to the heart of the matter. "Skipping right through to 'Z' " was the only possible way that Johnson's name could appear on the ballot.

When Fortas had finished talking, there was dead silence. Not one of the previously voluble lawyers ventured so much as a comment. "Everyone was delighted to have me take the responsibility," Fortas recalled with a tight, sardonic smile. But Lyndon Johnson was a leader of men. The silence was broken by the voice—hard, flat, and decisive—of the man whose "political life was at stake," the man who would "lose everything" if Fortas' gamble failed.

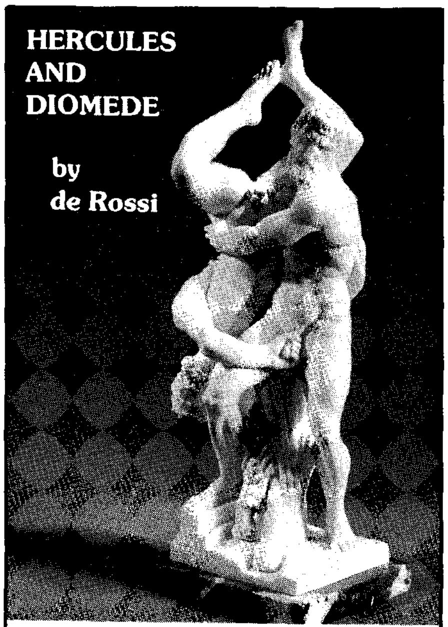
"Let's do what Abe says," Lyndon Johnson said.

Fortas asked for a secretary, and went into an adjoining room. In what seemed an astonishingly short time, he returned with a one- or two-page outline of a brief. "That's all you need," he said.

THE next day, the lawyers did what Abe had told them to do. Luther E. Jones translated Fortas' draft into a formal brief. The man known as "the finest appellate lawyer" in Texas considered himself honored to be allowed to work on a brief outlined by Abe Fortas. Jones was, as one magazine was to put it, "the man with probably the finest technical knowledge in the state," but he knew enough to know how his expertise compared with Fortas'. "It was a thing of beauty to watch the way he handled it," Jones would say. "He listened to all of us for perhaps an hour, took all our work, and got a secretary, and in ten minutes came back with a very brief proposition. . . . You see, a super-expert doesn't need to beat around the bush. He knows exactly what needs to be done, and he does it." Jones himself flew—in a Brown & Root plane—to New Orleans to file the brief with the clerk of the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals. Analyzing previous rulings by the court's six judges, a group of attorneys assembled by the lobbyist Thomas G. Corcoran in Washington found, in Judge Joseph C. Hutcheson, Jr., of Houston, a jurist whose record strongly suggested an almost out-of-hand rejection of Johnson's plea; Hutcheson had once held, in fact, that a stay of a lower-court injunction required the concurrence of at least three Circuit Court judges. In line with Fortas' strategy, therefore, it was to Hutcheson that Johnson's attorneys applied for a stay of Judge Davidson's injunction, and Hutcheson agreed to hear the application.

And, in the event, the court fight unfolded precisely as Abe Fortas had predicted. At the conclusion of a four-hour hearing in his chambers in the federal courthouse in Houston on Friday, September 24th, Judge Hutcheson caused consternation in the Johnson camp by announcing that he would take the case under advisement. But the advisement lasted only five hours—for Lyndon Johnson, of course, five terrible hours of waiting. What if the judge delayed his decision too long? Summoning the attorneys back to his chambers that same evening, however, Hutcheson handed down his decision—the decision that Fortas had forecast. Had Johnson's attorneys asked that "something affirmative be done," the matter would have been more complicated, Hutcheson said, but "if you merely ask" that the injunction be stayed, "I can't do it. I am only one individual. I can't act independently" of the entire court in overruling another judge. "It is quite clear that I, as a single circuit judge, have no power and ought not set aside or stay the injunction." The leaders of Johnson's Washington legal corps—Corcoran and the three senior partners of Arnold, Fortas & Porter—thereupon telephoned Justice Black at his home, in Alexandria, Virginia, on Saturday to ask if he would hear their application for a stay of the injunction. Black agreed to do so, setting the date for Tuesday, September 28th, to allow time for Stevenson to arrange for legal representation at the hearing.

HARRY TRUMAN's campaign train pulled in to San Antonio early Sunday morning, September 26th. Waiting at the station to greet the President was a crowd of politicians—including one so altered in appearance since he had left Washington in May to begin his campaign for the Senate that Truman's aide Jonathan Daniels, who had not seen him in the interven-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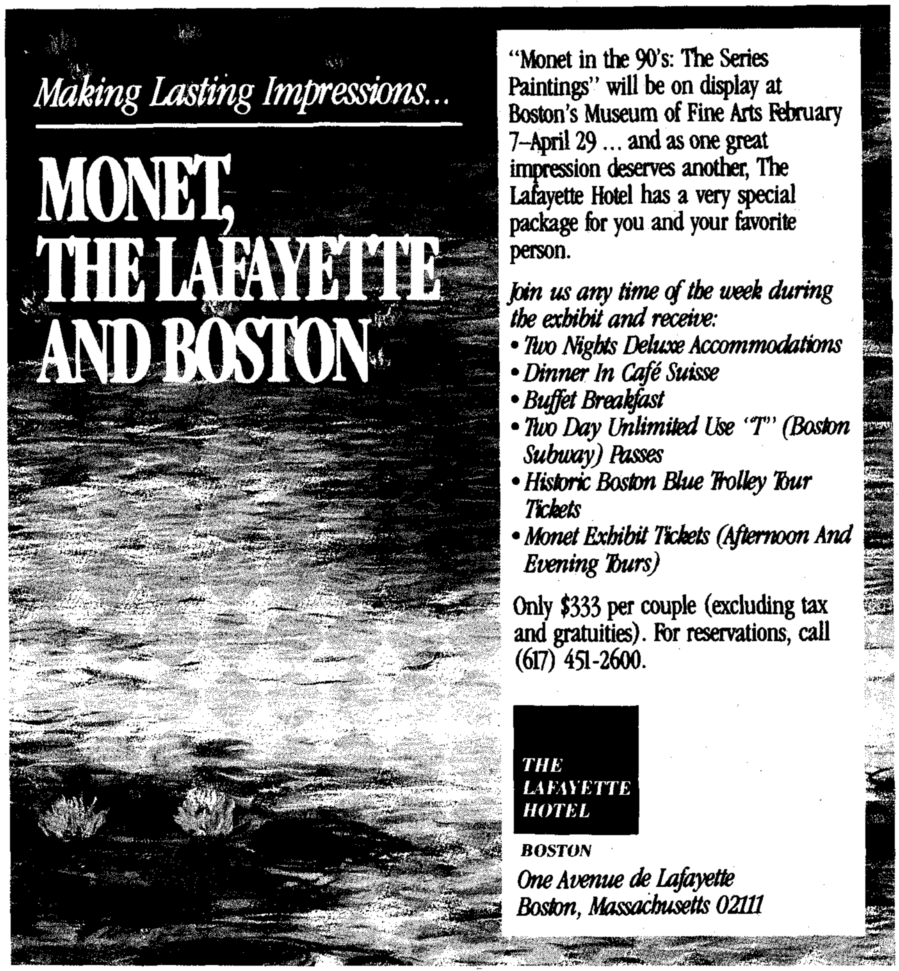
ing months, was startled when Johnson boarded the train. "I think the most dramatic time I ever saw Lyndon Johnson was on that trip," Daniels was to recall. "He came aboard, looking like the damnedest tramp I ever saw in my life. He couldn't have shaved in at least two days, and he looked sick as hell. . . . If he lost at that point, he was pretty well licked for the rest of his life. He was going to be a great man or just another Texan, and at that point he didn't know and nobody else knew which it was going to be." Someone handed Johnson a large drink of Scotch. His hands shook as he drank it. He had been standing with other dignitaries, but went over to the crowd and began shaking hands—as if he couldn't stop.

For Lyndon Johnson, Monday was a day of applause. However cool Truman's feelings toward him had been before, Texas was indispensable to the President's own reëlection chances in 1948, and two of the men most important if he was to carry Texas were on the train with him: his allies Sam Rayburn and United States Attorney General Tom Clark. And, as the columnists Evans and Novak were to put it, "for all of his conservative transgressions during the Eightieth Congress, Lyndon Johnson would be infinitely preferable to the adamantly conservative Coke Stevenson in the Senate." And there were more immediate considerations: the President was anxious to keep Texas from joining Strom Thurmond's States Rights rebellion, and the people identified as States Righters in Texas were among Stevenson's supporters. At stop after stop, the President, with Johnson standing beside him on the back platform, told the crowds, "My advice to you is to go to the polls on Election Day and send Lyndon Johnson to the Senate."

But there was another sound that day, too: the rap of gavels in South Texas courthouses. For a race began on this Monday, September 27, 1948—a race that would determine Lyndon Johnson's future. It was run in three little courthouses in the Rio Grande Valley and, sixteen hundred miles to the north, in Washington, D.C., in the gleaming marble temple of the United States Supreme Court. The two masters in chancery appointed by Judge Davidson—William Robert Smith, for thirteen years United States Attorney for the Western District of Texas, and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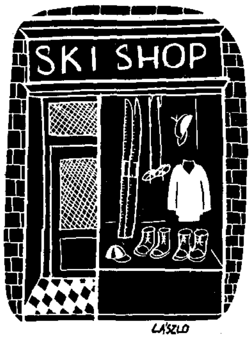
J. M. (Mac) Burnett, one of Smith's longtime deputies—issued subpoenas on Monday morning requiring election officials of Jim Wells, Duval, and Zapata Counties to appear before them and produce their counties' ballot boxes, poll lists, and tally sheets. The subpoenas were returnable that very afternoon: at 3 P.M. that day, Smith would begin the Jim Wells hearing in Alice, while Burnett simultaneously opened one in San Diego, the Duval County seat. The testimony of witnesses would be taken expeditiously, the two masters announced. Their hearings would be completed by Friday, so that their official written reports could be submitted to Davidson by Saturday, October 2nd, the deadline the judge had set. In Washington, Justice Black's hearing would not begin until Tuesday, September 28th. Abe Fortas had assured Lyndon Johnson that Black's ruling would be favorable, because of the jurisdictional grounds, but, favorable or not, the ruling might come too late. If the poll lists and tally sheets were examined and the ballot boxes opened, and if the evidence in them, combined with witnesses' testimony, proved—proved definitively, in public, in court, in a sworn official record summarized in the masters' official reports—that in Jim Wells County and Zapata County hundreds of votes, and in Duval County thousands, that had been counted in Johnson's column were not votes at all but simply figures added to tally sheets on the whim of election judges, not even a Supreme Court ruling could save his reputation. A ruling might not, in fact, be able even to save his seat: pro forma though many Senate investigations of elections might be, how could the Senate ignore proof—official, sworn court records—of such patent illegality?



All that Monday and Tuesday, therefore, Johnson's attorneys in the Valley courthouses employed delaying tactics—abetted by further demonstrations of the difficulty of obtaining evidence in a land outside the law. The masters' subpoenas had behind them the full authority of a federal court, but when United States marshals attempted to serve them on election officials they were in most cases unable to do so. The witnesses had disappeared. In Duval County, for example, more than fifty had been subpoenaed but only eight could be located; many of the others, including election judges and clerks and the chairman of the county Democratic committee, Campbell King, were reported to be "on vacation"—in Mexico, where, of course, United States subpoenas had no force.

In Jim Wells County, subpoenas had been issued for three key election officials. When Smith gavelled his hearing to order in the Jim Wells County Courthouse, Marshal W. W. Ainsworth reported that not one of the three could be found. The most important official, Tom Donald, who had had custody of the election records and had refused to open the bank vault to allow Coke Stevenson's attorneys to inspect them, had apparently left town that very morning—just about the time the subpoenas had been issued, in fact. And when Smith, over Everett Looney's objections, began to probe into Donald's whereabouts ("The Court" wants to "lay . . . hands on those records") the federal master was informed that Donald had left town without telling even his wife where he was going or when he might return. That night, Donald telephoned her to say he was across the border in Mexico; he gave her no hint of where in Mexico, however, or "what he was going to do" there, or how long he was planning to stay.

Those witnesses who were located, moreover, were in general somewhat less than helpful when they took the stand. Duval's county judge, Dan Tobin, testified that he did not know the names of ten of the county's eleven precinct election judges—or any information to speak of about poll taxes, election returns, or any other aspect of the election. Another Duval official said that "yes, many several thousands" of poll-tax receipts had been financed by outside parties. He could not, however, recall who these outsiders were.

The evidence had disappeared, too. If any piece of evidence was crucial, it was the poll list and tally sheet from Jim Wells' Precinct 13. Coke Stevenson's lawyers, who had seen these documents, were convinced that if they were produced in court their contents would prove beyond doubt that the election had been stolen for Lyndon Johnson.

The law required three copies of those documents: one copy sealed in the Precinct 13 ballot box along with the ballots, one copy in the custody of the chairman of the county Democratic committee, and one copy in the custody of the election judge at that precinct—Luis Salas. Former committee secretary Donald was missing, of course, but now Salas, previously missing, allowed himself to be found and served with a subpoena. As Stevenson and his attorneys, sitting in court, watched the burly former *pistolero* swagger to the stand, they believed that they were close at last to obtaining the proof they had been seeking.

They were wrong. Salas was quite relaxed as one of Stevenson's attorneys, Connie C. Renfro, questioned him: he seemed to regard the proceedings almost as a joke. Renfro took him through the election procedure, and elicited from him the fact that he had indeed made the three required copies of the poll and tally documents, placing them in large manila envelopes, about two feet square, and had indeed put one copy in the ballot box, given one to the Democratic officials, and kept one himself.

And, Renfro asked, where is the one that you kept yourself?

"It is lost," Salas replied.

Salas had a further revelation to make. It emerged as he was explaining the circumstances under which he had lost his copy of the records. Following the election, he said, "there has been so much talk about this Box 13" that on September 15th he had decided to compare his copy with Donald's. "You see, I had been hearing a lot of talking that there was something wrong with the election. The election was level, nothing wrong with the election. I went to get the copies from Tom Donald to compare with mine." After Donald gave him the committee's copy, Salas said, he put both copies in his car and drove to a bar in Alice, the Baile Española. "I stayed there from five, I guess, until nine-thirty, something like that, and when I come back they stole everything from the car."

This revelation did not sink in immediately. Then Renfro asked, "Your copy and Donald's copy, too?"

"Yes, sir," Salas said. Both lists

were lost. The poll list and tally sheet that Coke Stevenson and his aides had seen at the bank had disappeared.

Salas had a few more points to make under questioning. He had indeed gone to the Alice *News* on the night of the primary, he said, and he had indeed seen the reporter Cliff DuBose there. But, he said, he had never told DuBose how many votes Johnson or Stevenson had received that day: "I never say *anything* about how many votes anybody got." According to Salas' testimony, DuBose was a rather uninquisitive reporter.

"Did he ask you?" Renfro demanded in a voice that was by now indignant.

"No, sir," Salas replied.

Outraged, Renfro next asked Salas about the report that two hundred votes had been added.

"It is not true," Salas said. Absolutely unruffled, he left the stand with a broad grin, to shouts from the crowd of "*Viva Luis Salas! Viva Indio!*"

The same pattern of disappearing evidence was unfolding in Duval County as well—in Duval, where thousands of votes were at issue. Only eight of the fifty Duval election judges and clerks subpoenaed had been found, but as George Parr sat listening to their testimony he may have felt that even eight was too many. For their testimony reinforced the widespread belief that in his county "they didn't vote 'em, they just counted 'em."

One of the eight was the presiding election judge at Precinct 6, Ernesto Benavides. He testified that after the polls closed on Primary Day he made the required three copies of the poll and tally lists, placed two of them in the locked ballot box, and left one, his own, at the schoolhouse at which the voting had been held. And where is your own copy now? he was asked.

He did not know, he said. "Later, I couldn't find it."

"It disappeared?" he was asked.

"Yes, sir." When he had returned to the school four or five days later to look for it, "it was lost."

Burnett, the federal master, interrupted—quite sharply—to take over the questioning himself. Were the ballots from your precinct actually counted and included in the official total from the county? the master asked.

At first Benavides replied, "I don't know." Then he hesitated. In front of him, in the crowded little courtroom, George Parr sat waiting to hear his answer. "Yes," Benavides said.

How was that possible? the master demanded. Since Benavides had testified that the results had been given to Campbell King Monday morning, how could the county chairman obtain the results, if one list was at the school and the other two were in the locked box?

"I don't know," Benavides replied.

Stevenson's lawyers believed a similar situation had existed at most of the ten other Duval precincts. During the three weeks since Stevenson's trip to Alice, they had found a surprisingly large number of men and women in the Valley willing to brave George Parr's wrath, and they had affidavits that they felt proved that few, if any, of the ten precincts had so much as bothered to file returns with county officials. Parr and his boys had simply written down any numbers they pleased, giving Johnson whatever totals the candidate or his aides said were needed. That was the explanation for the hundred-to-one majority; only the lack of more poll-tax receipts had stopped Parr from giving Johnson even more votes.

In Zapata County, where Burnett also held hearings, there was a change in the wording of the script. Instead of the word "lost," synonyms were employed—"gone," for example, and "missing." There was, however, no change in the basic plot. The key precinct in Zapata was No. 3, where the late correction six days after the primary had given Johnson forty-five crucial additional votes. The records from all four of the county's precincts, contained in four large manila envelopes, had been placed in a file cabinet in the office of the county judge, Manuel Bravo, by the county Democratic chairman, Josefa Gutirez. Mrs. Gutirez testified that when she—and the records—were subpoenaed by the federal master she had gone to Judge Bravo's office to get the records back and bring them to the hearing. Judge Bravo had thereupon given her envelopes—three envelopes. They were from Precincts 1, 2, and 4. "I put four in and there were only three," Mrs. Gutirez said. "I don't know what happened to the other. . . . I didn't even know it was missing." Called to the stand, Judge Bravo said he didn't know, either. He had put four in his filing cabinet, he said, but when he went to get them there were only three. "No. 3 was gone." Its "returns were missing."

Nonetheless, the two masters did not let the missing witnesses and evidence stop their investigation. In the Jim Wells County Courthouse, for example, Salas testified that the first two copies of the crucial poll list had been lost, but Stevenson's attorney Josh Groce told Smith, "Sir, I would like to suggest that there is one other copy of this poll list that is available. That is the one in the ballot box; and I would think that Your Honor, under the order of this court, would have the right to bring that ballot box into this court here, open the ballot box and take out only the poll list . . . and we request the commissioner [master] so to do."

Johnson's lawyers leaped to their feet, Looney protesting that only "an express order of the [state] District Court" could authorize the opening of a ballot box, Tarleton, his shock of shaggy white hair awry as he stamped around the courtroom, his arms extended upward as if to call the heavens to witness this contemplated injustice, invoking broader grounds: for a federal official to open a state ballot box would be a return to "the evil days of Reconstruction!" he shouted. "There is still the doctrine of states' rights. . . . These ballot boxes . . . are secure in their sanctity under the law of this state and are not the subject of invasion by outside authority."

But Smith was firm. "I have the power to order the United States Marshal to impound those ballot boxes, and the Marshal is so ordered," he said. Writing out the order, Smith handed it to Marshal Ainsworth, who served it on the county clerk, in his office down the corridor, and before the close of court Monday twenty ballot boxes that had been used in the county's seventeen precincts had been carried in by janitors and piled up in front of Smith's bench. Some of the cylindrical, rather

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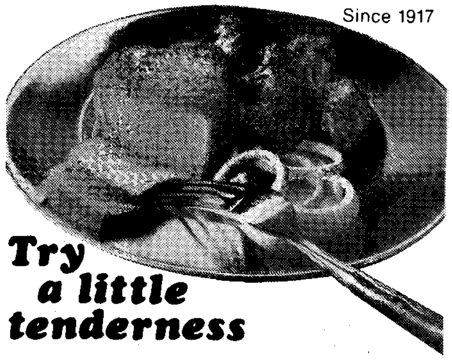

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battered tin drums with removable tops (voters had placed their ballots in the drums through slits in the covers) were labelled with precinct numbers, some were not. Some of the drums were padlocked, some were padlocked but with keys dangling from the padlocks, some were unlocked. Presumably, the twenty included the box or boxes from Precinct 13.

Coke Stevenson, sitting motionless at a counsel table, may have felt that there in front of him, not five feet away, was the evidence he had sought for so long. One of Lyndon Johnson's allies has since said that it was Johnson's "major purpose . . . not to permit the opening of Box 13." Now a federal master had ordered Box 13 to be brought into court, and it was in the custody of a United States marshal—ready to be opened. Whatever the condition of those tin drums—locked or unlocked, labelled or unlabelled—one of them either would or would not contain that last copy of Precinct 13's poll list. If the list was found, proving the legality or illegality of the two hundred decisive votes would be swift and relatively easy. If the list was not found, such proof would be difficult, but in the opinion of the master, on whose report Judge Davidson would base his decision on making the injunction permanent, the mere fact that all copies of the list had disappeared would be highly significant. Monday had been a day of applause for Lyndon Johnson. There would be no applause on Tuesday. No crowd noise would obscure the rap of the gavels. The campaign would have narrowed to that race in court. On that Tuesday, in Alice, Texas, a federal master would begin opening the ballot boxes that were the heart of the investigation into Lyndon Johnson's senatorial campaign. On that same day, in Washington, D.C., Justice Black would be deciding whether to halt that investigation or allow it to continue.

THE starting time in both Washington and Alice on Tuesday was nine-thirty in the morning, but, because of the different time zones, the hearing in Washington began an hour earlier. So close was the race that that sixty minutes' lead might make the difference. Filing into Hugo Black's oak-panelled, book-lined chambers in the Supreme Court Building on Tuesday morning was Lyndon Johnson's first team: Wirtz, Allred, and four prominent New Dealers—Fortas, his law partners Thurman Arnold and Paul A. Porter, and former Assistant Solicitor General Hugh Cox. Appearing alone for Stevenson was Dan Moody, who had disdained the help of younger attorneys; the civil-rights issue—the key issue that authorized federal jurisdiction, in the opinion of the young lawyers assisting Stevenson—was raised only in passing. Sitting in a semicircle around the Justice's desk, as Black rocked in his swivel chair, the attorneys presented essentially the same arguments they had been repeating for a month in lower courts. Moody said that the issue was fraud—whether it had been committed on Lyndon Johnson's behalf and whether Johnson should be allowed to benefit from it. In ordering the masters' hearings, Moody said, Judge Davidson had been attempting "to prevent the reaping of a harvest from the perpetration of a fraud." Fortas said that the issue was jurisdiction: election contests were "irrevocably and incontestably vested" in Texas state law and should not be supervised by a federal court. Weighing in with an argument that had significant political connotations in a year when the balance of power in the United States Senate might hinge on Texas, Wirtz warned that if Stevenson succeeded in keeping Johnson's name off the ballot "there will be no name of a Democratic nominee. The Republican nominee . . . will be the only candidate on the ticket."

Down in the Alice Courthouse, Parr had stationed a deputy sheriff next to the telephone in the county judge's office. Allred had been given the number of that phone and told to call the instant Black announced a verdict, so that if the verdict was favorable not a moment would be lost in stopping the Alice hearing. Parr had ordered the lines kept clear for a call from Washington.

For hours on Tuesday, with the lawyers still arguing before Justice Black, the phone did not ring. But although federal master Smith had wanted to see the poll list and tally sheet from Box 13 as soon as he convened his hearing Tuesday morning, he was unable to do so, because of difficulties in identifying it. Thanks to the delay this caused, although the arguments in Washington lasted for almost four hours, when they concluded—at a little after 1 P.M. Washington time—and Black announced he would retire to consider his decision, down in Alice none of the twenty boxes had been opened. At about the time that Black retired, Smith announced a recess for lunch. The outcome of the race—between Black's decision and the opening of Ballot Box 13—was still in doubt.

After lunch, with Smith now determined to open the box, the difficulties intensified—because the box first had to be identified, and the person called to the witness stand to identify it was Luis Salas.

During that lunch recess, Salas had been informed that the two men who had actually marked the ballots would be put on the stand. If they were, Salas was to recall long afterward, he was sure "they would be indicted." He told Ed Lloyd, "This investigation going bad for us, Ed." If the two men were in legal danger, he said, "I am going to tell the truth."

"Don't say anything yet," Lloyd replied, in panic. "Hold your horses."

On the witness stand, however, Salas showed no qualms. Laughing and joking, to the appreciation of friends in the courtroom, Salas managed to do a thorough job of sowing confusion about which of the twenty tin containers was Precinct 13's. As Stevenson and his attorneys sat grimly watching, unable to speed the process, Salas said that the ballot box in which he had placed the poll and tally lists was not among the twenty that had been brought to court. (How he knew that was unclear, since he also said that he had placed no identifying mark of any kind on it.) Then he said that Precinct 13 had not one but two ballot boxes. Smith directed that Salas inspect the boxes. One by one—slowly—he looked them over, and found for each one some reason that it was probably not from his Precinct 13. Finally, he tentatively—very tentatively—identified two.

Thanks to the confusion Salas sowed, he was still on the stand and none of the boxes had yet been opened when, on Tuesday afternoon, a clerk summoned Dan Moody and Johnson's sextet of lawyers to Black's chambers. The Justice, he said, was ready to announce his decision.

Black agreed with Fortas. "It would be a drastic break with the past, which I can't believe Congress ever intended to permit, for a federal judge to go into the business of conducting what is to every intent and purpose a contest of an election in the state," he said. The issue, he said, in an obvious reference to the balance of power in the Senate, is of "supreme public importance. Not only are the parties interested, but the whole State of Texas and beyond the state." Black disagreed with Moody's contention that Stevenson had no other recourse but the federal courts. "What about the Senate?" he asked. "The Senate is the judge of the qualification of its own members, finally." While "fraud, very reprehensible fraud" had been charged, he said, fraud was a criminal charge, "punishable as crime if the charges are sustained." Therefore, he said, "I am going to grant a stay until the full Supreme Court has an opportunity to consider it." Under the procedure in such hearings, Johnson's attorneys had to draft the order granting the stay. Instructing them to do so, Black said he would sign the order on Wednesday.

Trotting—almost running—out of Black's chambers, Allred telephoned Alice and San Diego to notify Parr's men of the decision, and within minutes Smith recessed his hearing while he went into the county judge's office and telephoned Judge Davidson in Fort Worth to ask for instructions.

Reporters had told Davidson of the decision, but they did not know precisely what Black had ruled, and Davidson had received no official notification. He did "not yet know the scope of Justice Black's action," he told Smith, but if it merely stayed the injunction the masters' hearings, "being more in the nature of a trial on the merits, would have nothing to do with the injunctive matter." Informed that Black's order was not yet drafted, and that Black would not sign it until the following day, Davidson instructed Smith to proceed with his hearing. Returning to the courtroom, Smith did so—over the furious protests of Johnson's attorneys. And when, a few minutes later, Salas finally completed his identification of the ballot boxes, the master said, "The court is going to open the ballot boxes."

Jumping to their feet again and rushing to the bench, shouting at Smith, Johnson's lawyers stalled almost frantically to keep the boxes

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The sun is a Tudor arch sustaining the sky.
In a moment it will fall. Blackbirds
with crimson suns on their wings
squawk in protest, and my sister,
in lovely, billowy clothes from Anticipation,
picks a sky-blue cornflower that
she'll press between pages of the O.E.D.

In the lightless vault of words
the petal tips will caress
an adjective from the Old French.

Now, as she strays through the field,
she asks me if she's beginning to look like
Ophelia—she doesn't know why,
she just imagines Ophelia long-haired
and pregnant—and I say, No, no,
you're a terrible singer and much too sane,

and she pulls her ample sleeves
together in a solemn, mandarin way
and bows to the birds startling
the sky and bows to the dying sun
and bows to me, her younger brother,
who wants nothing more of the world
than to salt the stream before her
that she may float and float
and never drown.

—David Woo

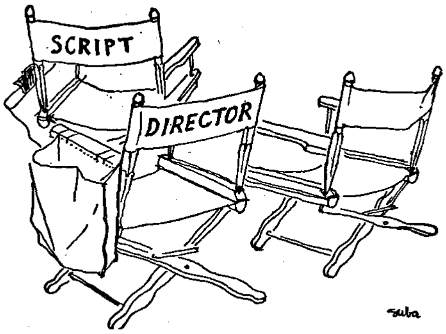
• •

closed, Tarleton repeating his arguments that opening them would violate state laws and statutes, Looney saying, "If the practice permits, and I think it does . . . we should like time" to appeal directly to Judge Davidson for a ruling about the opening of the ballot boxes. But Smith said, "I have made my ruling." He had been appointed to find out the truth about Precinct 13, he said. That required the poll and tally lists, and two of the three copies of those lists had been lost. "There is nothing left for me to do but to look to the third place where they are supposed to be, and, if they are there, to examine them." Tarleton shouted that because of Salas' testimony no one could even be sure which of the twenty boxes were Precinct 13's. Smith admitted that the attorney was correct, but added that if the two boxes that Salas had identified were not Precinct 13's, "then I am going to open the rest of them." He slammed down his gavel. In a voice that reporters called "stern," he said, "We will open all the boxes if necessary." The covers of the two tin drums identified by Salas were secured not by locks but by baling wire twisted through the padlock hasps. Smith had Marshal Ainsworth bring him a heavy pair of pliers. With them, he untwisted the wire of the two drums, and then he took off their covers.

One of the two drums was indeed a ballot box from Precinct 13, Jim Wells County. Despite his efforts to confuse the court, Salas had testified that on Election Day he had signed the back of each ballot, and when Smith reached into this drum he found that the ballots inside were signed "Luis Salas." Pulling seven out at random (they bore numbers from 160 to 1010), Smith asked Salas formally, "I will ask you if that is *your* signature," and Salas acknowledged that it was. Then the master looked through the ballot box. It contained hundreds of ballots. It did not contain a poll list or a tally sheet.

The second box was not from Precinct 13. It contained ballots from Precinct 6. There were still eighteen boxes piled up in front of Smith, and the master was determined to find out for certain whether the crucial lists were in one of them. If the lists were not in one of those boxes—either because when the second Precinct 13 box was identified and opened the lists were not inside, or because there turned out to be no other box from Precinct 13 in the pile—that would mean that the third copy of the lists had disappeared like the first two, and, in Smith's opinion, the destruction of every copy of Box 13's records would be "the most potent piece of evidence" of the illegality of the returns that had elected Lyndon Johnson. When Salas, recalled to the stand, continued to maintain that none of the eighteen other boxes was the other box from his precinct, the master recessed the hearing until nine-thirty the following morning, Wednesday, and announced that he would open the rest of the boxes then.

Throughout that evening, lawyers worked in Washington to draft the text of an order for Justice Black's approval, and on Wednesday morning they presented it to him. Black retired to study it.



Meanwhile, in Alice on Wednesday morning, the climax of the master's hearing was at hand. Jamming the benches of the little courtroom and lining the walls in the rear and on the sides were witnesses—the witnesses who had testified in Fort Worth that they had not voted in Precinct 13, despite the fact that their names were on the poll list; and dozens of others, including the two men who Salas feared would be indicted if they were put on the stand. The witnesses had been told that they would be called to testify that day—as soon as the master had finished opening the ballot boxes. And Luis Salas was in court again, and during the night his resolution had hardened: he would not allow his election clerks to take the blame; if they were called to testify, he would take the stand again and, this time, tell the truth.

In front of Lyndon Johnson's attorneys were the ballot boxes, behind them and all around them were the witnesses: they were surrounded by the evidence they had been fighting to keep out of the record. Desperately hoping for the arrival of Justice Black's order, they made a new time-consuming motion that required a ruling from Smith. Parr's deputy sheriff was again stationed in the county judge's office down the hall from the courtroom, waiting for the phone call from Washington that would keep the rest of the ballot boxes from being opened. But the call still had not come. "Let's proceed," Smith said. Because—perhaps unsurprisingly—the keys to the padlocks on ten of the eighteen boxes were missing, Smith sent for a locksmith, and began opening the other eight boxes.

At one point that morning, the master let his feelings show through. As he was about to open a box, one that Salas said was not from Precinct 13, Tarleton said, "We object to the opening of that box because a witness has positively testified it was not Box 13."

"That witness testified to a lot of other things, too," Smith said dryly, opening the box.

The stream of frenzied interruptions by Johnson's attorneys continued. When Smith looked at ballots to see what precinct number they bore, Looney objected to his "examining . . . ballots" from other boxes.

Smith replied that he was just trying to see if they were Box 13.

"A violation of the sanctity of the ballot box!" Tarleton shouted. "You have impeached the verity of the ballot when you have opened the box."

Smith kept proceeding through the boxes. At the start of that Wednesday morning, eighteen had stood between him and the proof he considered "most potent." One by one, that morning, the eighteen were being opened. First came the eight unlocked boxes. None contained the ballots from Precinct 13. There were ten to go, and by this time the locksmith was opening them. The phone call from Washington had not come. The race was very close now.

Shortly after noon, Smith recessed the hearing for lunch. When he reconvened, at one-thirty, the phone in the county judge's office still had not rung. Pointing to the ten remaining ballot boxes, the master said, "Let's pass [them] up, please." He had opened two—neither from Box 13—and was lifting the top from a third when, at one-fifty, the phone rang. Allred was on the phone. Justice Black had just signed an order directing that all proceedings in the case be stayed "until further order of the Supreme Court." Shoving his way through the spectators jamming the courtroom door, the deputy sheriff ran up to Dudley Tarleton and whispered to him. The white-haired attorney, oratorical tricks forgotten for once, leaped up and, without a word to Smith, ran behind the sheriff to the county judge's office, where Allred told him that Davidson had received Black's order, and had sent a telegram to Smith (and to federal master Burnett, in Zapata) ordering them to halt their hearings. When Tarleton returned to the courtroom and informed Smith of this, the master telephoned Davidson, who confirmed Tarleton's report. Resuming his seat on the bench, Smith said, "Judge Davidson . . . has just instructed me to close this hearing and proceed no further." He did so.

The race was over. The third copy of the poll list had not been found (and never would be), but, because eight of the ballot boxes had not been opened, no one would ever be able to prove definitively that all three copies had vanished. The hearings ended in anticlimax. Smith told the courtroom that he would be unable to draw any conclusions from the hearing. "I hardly see how I could make any findings . . . on a record wholly incomplete," he said. "The testimony was not all in, and one of the parties had not been heard and the other party had been heard only in part. . . . As a matter of fact the plaintiff had just begun to develop the case when we adjourned." To this, Groce added a statement poignant to Stevenson's adherents. "I am so full of what went on in Fort Worth, which Your Honor does not know about."

Well, Smith repeated, the whole record is not in.

"It will be," Groce said.

GROCE was wrong. On October 5th, the Supreme Court refused to hear Coke Stevenson's petition that it consider Black's stay of the injunction. On January 31, 1949, the Court rejected Stevenson's petition for a trial on the merits of the case. The hearing Judge Davidson had ordered would never be resumed. The remaining ballot boxes were never to be opened. The testimony of the witnesses who filed out of the Alice Courthouse—and out of the courthouses in Duval and Zapata Counties—without being

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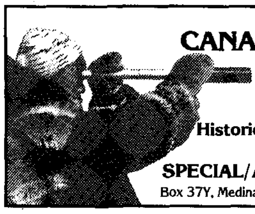

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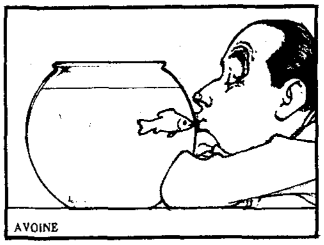
heard was never to be heard. Definitive proof that the decisive two hundred Box 13 “votes” had not been cast would never be obtained. Proof that thousands of other votes from the Rio Grande Valley—votes indispensable to Johnson’s election—were not votes at all but merely numbers written on a tally sheet by border-county *jefes* would never be obtained. The federal courts’ investigation of Lyndon Johnson’s 1948 senatorial victory was over. Evidence that some of these votes were “cast” by dead men would never be presented in a court of law. Abe Fortas’ strategy had worked with only a few minutes to spare. But it had worked. After Lyndon Johnson easily defeated Republican Jack Porter in the November election, he was seated in the Senate.

ALTHOUGH Lyndon Johnson was now a senator, interest in the 1948 election did not fade away, and in 1952 it was fuelled by an incident that created a sensation in the Texas media. It involved one of George Parr’s Mexican-American *pistoleros*, Duval County Deputy Sheriff Sam Smithwick, who in 1949 had shot to death a news commentator on an Alice radio station who had attacked the corruption of the Parr regime. Sentenced to life imprisonment, Smithwick, in 1952, wrote to Coke Stevenson from the Texas State Penitentiary at Huntsville. He said that in 1949 he had “recovered” the missing “Box 13” from the Parr aides who had originally been ordered to dispose of it. He had hidden it, he wrote, and could produce the ballot box “if you are interested.” He asked Stevenson to visit him at Huntsville to discuss “this matter in detail.”



Receiving the letter at his ranch, Stevenson set out for the prison, but stopped in Junction to call and notify prison officials he was coming. They told him not to bother. Sam Smithwick, they said, was dead. He had committed suicide in his cell by tying a towel around his neck, attaching it to the window bars, and then slipping off his bed. Smithwick’s letter, reproduced on the front page of the Dallas *News*, made headlines—banner headlines—throughout Texas, particularly after the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* reported that “some guards and prisoners at the penitentiary had talked of the possibility that Smithwick” had been murdered. “Somewhere,” that article said, “the thief who stole election records from Precinct 13 in Jim Wells County after the 1948 senatorial election squirmed uncomfortably.” (Publication of Smithwick’s letter intensified suspicion among Stevenson supporters that the twenty boxes brought into the master’s hearing had not included the box that contained the poll and tally lists, that only one of two Precinct 13 boxes had been in court.) A dramatic cartoon in the *News* depicted a terrified Lyndon Johnson cowering under his bedsheets, while above him a huge ghost held a locked box labelled “Precinct 13.” No evidence whatever was ever adduced to link Lyndon Johnson with Smithwick’s death, and there is no reason to believe that such a link existed. Nevertheless, so widespread throughout Texas was the speculation that the death might be connected with the 1948 election that, after attempting at first to ignore the issue, Johnson was forced to issue a statement saying that disclosure of Smithwick’s letter appeared to be “a continuation of a fight by a group of disgruntled, disappointed people.” Johnson’s statement did not, however, end the speculation, and it helped to keep the story of Box 13 alive in Texas. Year after year, references to it continued to appear in the state’s newspapers and magazines. (A 1976 *Texas Monthly* article on “Historical Markers You Will Never See” referred to the “group of dead men, who had risen from the grave to cast their ballots in alphabetical order” for Lyndon Johnson.) It had become an enduring part of the state’s political history. And when Johnson moved onto the national stage the story followed him.

The national spotlight began to turn in Senator Johnson’s direction in 1951, when he was named Democratic whip—assistant floor leader—and as it did so its glare fell on these vivid episodes down in the Valley. The New York *Times Magazine* reported, “Exactly 87 votes in Texas put Johnson in the position to do his present job,” and various national news magazines made the same point. The country was told how, in what *Collier’s* called “a fabulous political and legal melee,” these votes had been cast. It was told how, in the words of the *Saturday Evening Post*, “Johnson’s attorneys rushed into court and obtained an injunction to prevent eliminating any votes on the ground of . . . fraud,” how he had won at the convention only through a twenty-nine-to-twenty-eight vote, how Justice Black’s ruling made it “too late to do anything else to keep Johnson’s name off the ballot.” The national spotlight, in fact, focussed on that previously all but unknown dukedom from which those eighty-seven votes had come, and on its ruler. A second *Collier’s* article that same year, entitled “Something Is Rotten in the State of Texas,” was about George Parr, and it said, “His power reaches into Washington.”

Not a few of these articles mentioned a nickname by which Johnson was sometimes known in Washington: Landslide Lyndon. His introduction to the nation came complete with the nickname, and with its provenance. As he made his entrance on the great stage of history, still in a relatively minor role, he entered with that story attached to him.

All during the nineteen-fifties, as Lyndon Johnson rose to power in the Senate and came to dominate it, his nickname, and the reasons behind it, punctuated major articles about him. When, in 1959, he began running for President, the spotlight intensified, and details emerged. *Look*, in a long two-part biographical article that listed the hurdles “likely to arise before Johnson in a campaign for the Presidency,” included “an allegation of fraud in his first election to the Senate.” Its author, Bill Davidson, interviewed Stevenson attorneys who had investigated in the Valley, and read some of the court transcripts. The article concluded, “There is no evidence that Johnson had anything to do with the admittedly peculiar goings-on in Jim Wells County. . . . Johnson did, however, sign a petition for a court injunction that stopped . . . eliminating any of Johnson’s votes. Since that time his enemies have labelled him ‘The Senator from the Thirteenth Precinct.’ ” Even favorable articles, such as a generally laudatory cover story in *Time*, mentioned the “suspicious 87 votes” and the “notorious Box 13.”

The Presidency brought a spotlight

more intense yet, and with that new intensity the 1948 election was elevated from being part of a cover story on Lyndon Johnson to a cover story itself. At the height of his popularity, in 1964, when he won his great election victory, on newsstands all over the country was "The Story of 87 Votes That Made History," the cover story of *U. S. News & World Report:* "The 87 votes . . . set him on the road to the White House. . . . If they had gone the other way, Lyndon Johnson probably would not now be occupying the White House." There, again, were pictures of the pile of ballot boxes, of Parr, of Hugo Black, of Lyndon and Coke, of Lady Bird with a sad smile; there, again, was the map of Texas, with Jim Wells County outlined in red.

Distrust of Johnson grew during his Presidency, and in 1967 Richard Rovere wrote in *The New Yorker:*

> It seems . . . to be a fact beyond dispute that no other President has ever had to live in an atmosphere so heavy with distrust and disbelief as Lyndon Johnson. . . . What may well be a majority of the American people are persuaded that the President is a dishonest and dishonorable man.

And as more and more articles appeared attempting to analyze his character and his reputation many of them turned to the 1948 election for clues. In a way, the most perceptive of these analysts said, the oft-repeated stories about that election formed in themselves a foundation for the misgivings. Tom Wicker, concluding in 1983 that "after Lyndon Johnson . . . trust in 'the President' was tarnished forever," added, "Even had there been no war, it would not have been hard to distrust Lyndon Johnson. Hadn't he been elected to the Senate by only eighty-seven votes, widely believed to have been stolen in Texas's notorious Duval County?" As a President passes into history, the perception of his character can sometimes be summarized by a single anecdote. George Washington, with his reputation for honesty and integrity, is often simplistically linked with the probably apocryphal incident of the cherry tree. Lyndon Johnson, passing into history, was also linked in the public consciousness with a single incident, not apocryphal—an incident summed up in a precinct number: "Box 13."

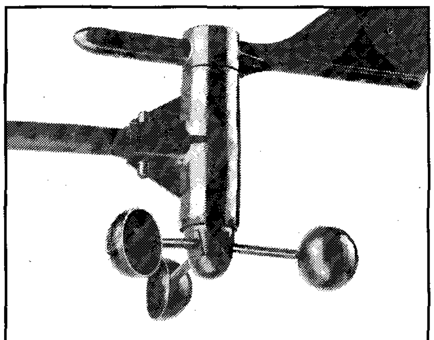
EVEN after Lyndon Johnson's Presidency—even after his death—bursts of news about Box 13 would still from time to time make headlines across the United States. The most dramatic were occasioned by Indio Salas. For twenty-nine years after the election, Box 13's election judge—the man who, in the opinion of Coke Stevenson's partisans, was most directly responsible for the "87 votes that made history"—steadfastly refused to discuss those votes, publicly or privately. But in a 1977 interview with James W. Mangan, an Associated Press reporter, Salas said that Stevenson's supporters had been correct all along. During his testimony in the Alice courtroom twenty-nine years before, Salas admitted, he had lied. Now, he said, he wanted to tell the truth. "Johnson did not win that election," he said. "It was stolen for him." And, he said, he, Luis Salas, had participated in the stealing.

Three days after the election, Salas said, he was summoned to George Parr's office in San Diego, where he found the Duke, Ed Lloyd, the Alice City Councilman Bruce Ainsworth—and Lyndon Johnson. Johnson, according to Salas, told Parr, "If I can get two hundred more votes, I've got it won." Speaking to Salas in Spanish, Parr asked him to add the two hundred votes. Salas refused, he said, but agreed to certify the votes as accurate if someone else added them. "I told him I would certify them because I didn't want anybody to think I'm not backing up my party; I said I would be with the party to the end," he told Mangan. That night, at about nine o'clock, in an office on the second floor of the Adams Building in Alice, two other men whom he refused to identify, because "they were just following orders," added the votes as he and Parr sat watching. "I was right there when they added the names," he told the Associated Press reporter. "They all came from the . . . poll tax sheet . . . I certified. . . . I kept my word to be loyal to my party." He did so, he said, despite misgivings about the identical handwriting. (Asked by the reporter why the handwriting had not been varied, he replied, "How? Only two guys? How they going to change it? The lawyers spotted it right away, they sure did.") Noticing, moreover, that the two men were adding the names from the poll-tax sheet in alphabetical order, he warned Parr that it was "a mistake" not to "mix up" the names. But Parr was too arrogant to accept advice. "I told George Parr, and he wouldn't listen to me. I said, 'Look at the "*A*." You add 10 or 12 names on that letter. Why don't you change it to the other—*C* or *D* or *X*—mix 'em up.' [But] George said 'That's all right.' George was stubborn. He would not listen to anybody. But it was stupid."

Salas confirmed all the suspicions of Coke Stevenson and his supporters. The two hundred votes were only some of the votes he had stolen for Lyndon Johnson, he said. On the witness stand, he had sworn that "the election was level, nothing wrong with the election." Now he told the Associated Press reporter that the election had not in fact been "level" even before the two hundred votes were added. On Election Day itself, he said, he had, in the Nayer School, "called out" as votes for Johnson votes that had been cast for Stevenson.

The Associated Press story was picked up by the nation's leading news magazines and by newspapers all across the United States. Once again, after almost three decades, the dateline "Alice, Tex." was on the front page of the New York *Times;* once again, in a thousand headlines, the familiar words were linked anew with Lyndon Johnson's name: "LBJ ELECTION 'STOLEN,' EX-OFFICIAL SAYS." There were again references to "the notorious Precinct 13," to "the notorious eighty-seven votes," again reminders that—as *Newsweek* put it, under the headline "HISTORY: LBJ ACCUSED"—"suspicions have persisted that Lyndon Baines Johnson stole his way into the U.S. Senate."

However, the director of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library, Harry Middleton, assured a Johnson biographer, Merle Miller, that Salas' assertions about Johnson's visit were untrue. "I know Johnson didn't do what Salas said because that would have been *dumb*," Middleton said. That was enough to convince Miller. In his biography, "Lyndon," Miller was to write that Middleton's remark was "perhaps the best comment on the Salas story." The library also announced that it would open five thou-



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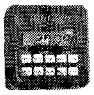

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sand pages of documents relating to the 1948 campaign. That was a lot of documents to be absorbed quickly, particularly by reporters unfamiliar with a rather complicated historical situation, so they could be excused for focussing on a "memo" from Johnson (actually a draft of a 1948 press release) denying the charges ("I am without knowledge concerning the ballots in either Duval, Jim Wells or Zapata Counties"), as if this draft press release had greater significance than any of a hundred press releases issued by both sides during the 1948 investigation.

Johnson's supporters focussed on Salas' statement that Johnson had been present personally at the meeting in Parr's office. Johnson's former aides Walter Jenkins, Mary Rather, and Charles Herring held a joint press conference to assure the reporters who had descended on Austin that Johnson's presence in San Diego would have been impossible. They insisted that Johnson had remained at his Dillman Street home in Austin for the four days after the election, keeping tabulations on the vote counting. "I was there all the time," Miss Rather said. "Congressman Johnson hardly left the house, except once to go downtown." Jenkins said, "It would have been absolutely impossible for Mr. Johnson to have been outside Austin for the length of time it would have taken for him to go to Alice [sic]." Their statements were hardly conclusive—all three acknowledged that their recollections of the hectic days twenty-nine years earlier were based solely on their memories, unsupported by any diaries or other documentation, and it would have taken no more than a few hours for Johnson to make the short drive to the Austin airport and fly the two hundred miles to San Diego in a Brown & Root plane and then return—but no confirmation of Salas' statement on this point existed. Many of the follow-up newspaper articles treated his statement with skepticism. The story faded inconclusively away.

The focus on that single point, however, enabled Johnson's defenders to obscure the fact that other points in Salas' statement *were* confirmed. Reporters' skepticism about his other statements would perhaps have been reduced if they had been more familiar with the over-all record of the case—and particularly the transcripts of the testimony given by other witnesses during the Federal District Court hearing in Fort Worth and the federal-master-in-chancery hearings in Alice, San Diego, and Zapata. The reporters believed that Salas was making new revelations in his 1977 statement. Actually, he was only confirming testimony that had been given by others during those hearings. The principal doubt surrounding their testimony had been the doubt he cast by denying what these witnesses had said. Now Salas was admitting that his denials had been false.

ANOTHER decade later, in March, 1986, I located Luis Salas in Houston. He was living with his wife, Tana, in a comfortably furnished mobile home in the large, pleasant back yard of the house of his daughter, Grace, and her family. The man who opened the door of the trailer bore, at eighty-four, little resemblance to Parr's fearsome "Indio." He was no longer tall and broad but stooped and slender, with gray hair, eyeglasses, and a gentle manner. Throughout the interview, he kept glancing anxiously toward his wife, who was sitting in the next room, obviously in poor health. But his eyes were keen, and he was mentally alert.

I was asking questions about the 1948 election when Salas suddenly said, "I have written it all down." Walking over to a trunk, he bent down stiffly and pulled out a manuscript—eighty-five pages of it typed, obviously by someone unsure of the rules of punctuation, with nine additional handwritten pages attached—and handed it to me. A paragraph near the beginning says, "Reader, I don't know if my story is to your liking, writing nonfiction is hard, I had no schooling, please excuse my spelling and grammar, but I had to write this book, to leave it to my family, when I go beyond, my time is running short, and I want to finish without adding or subtracting parts that are false, or invented by my imagination, no, everything has to be exactly the way it happened." The title of the manuscript is "Box 13."

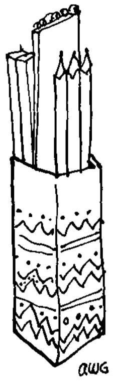
The manuscript is actually an autobiography, written in 1979. It tells in detail the story of Salas' youth in the little Mexican town of Bermejillo, in Durango, while Pancho Villa's Mexican Revolution was raging; how he learned Morse code at fourteen and became a railroad telegraph operator;

how “my Indian blood” made him a fighter and his size and temper made him feared until “my character was hardboil, cinic and arrogant, and never looked for trouble but if trouble came to me, I was right there.” When he was twenty-three, he wrote, he shot a man who later died of gangrene from the wounds. The man’s relatives swore revenge, and he fled Durango. “I was to become the wandering Jew,” he wrote. For years, working as a telegraph operator, he lived in lonely little shacks along the lines of the Mexican National Railways until, in 1936, he crossed the border into the United States and settled in Alice; “I missed the mountains, here was endless flatland.” In 1940, he related, he met George Parr, whom he revered and who gave him money, and a car and badges, and made him his enforcer: “My life changed with the power invested on me. . . . Wearing a gun gave me sense of security, but very few times, I used the gun, most of the disagreements I had were resolved with my fists, I weighed 210 pounds. . . . As long as I live, I never forget this man, and when I gave him my word to stay by his side regardless, I meant it, so up to date I still worship his memory.”

In his manuscript Salas attempts to explain his motives for writing it. One, he says, was to “show people the corruption of politics.” This explanation becomes less convincing as Salas talks, because of the pleasure in his voice and on his face when he says, “Any vote for Stevenson”—smile—“I counted for Johnson.” But in the manuscript he also gives other motives, which ring truer. In part, he stated, he wrote his “book” because he wanted his children to know the story of Box 13, and, indeed, of his whole life. “Now is the year 1979,” he wrote. “I am running short of time, feel sick and tired, but . . . before I go beyond this world, I had to tell the truth. . . . My wife Tana know why [he certified the two hundred votes] for Lyndon Johnson but my three children, they don’t know why, when they read my book, I hope they will understand, and find me free from blame, I am certain they are not going to be against me.” Before he died, he wrote, he wanted to put down the truth for them. And in part, he stated, he wrote his “book” because he wanted history to know the story of Box 13—and his role in it. The elderly, frail Mexican-American man sitting in the trailer in Houston felt very strongly that he was a part of history—a small but, in his view, a vital part (“I had to certify” the crucial two hundred votes; “we put L B Johnson as senator for Texas, and this position opened the road to reach the Presidency”)—and he had written it “exactly the way it happened” so that history would acknowledge his role. His story, he wrote, was the story of “how an Indian boy raised in the rugged mountains of Durango came to this country and was involved in one of the most notorious scandals of politics that opened the road for L B Johnson to reach the presidency of this country, this is history like it or not, nobody can erase these facts.”

Salas’ pride, moreover, was clearly hurt when finally, in 1977, he told the Associated Press the story he had waited so long to tell: “Many people did not believe.” “The people have a good reason not believe what I wrote in the book,” he admits in “Box 13.” “The reason is that I lied under oath.” But, he said, the story he told the Associated Press was “the true story.” Perhaps, he wrote, if he put all the facts down in detail, in a book, people would believe.

In “Box 13” Salas mentions two other reasons for coming forward at last to tell the story he had concealed for so many years. One is that George Parr had died in 1975. “I gave George my word to stay at his side to the end,” he wrote. “That end came when George died, that released me from my promise.” The other reason he gives is yet one more reminder of the force of the personality of the former Governor of Texas, and of its effect on people who hardly knew him.



Salas wrote about the moment in the hearing in Alice when the federal master announced that Justice Black had ruled and the hearing was over. As the announcement was made, he wrote, “I looked at Coke Stevenson and that gave the shivers. . . . Still remember the look in his eyes, frustration, despair and desperation, when we all heard. At that moment I had pity and compassion for the man, we stole his well-deserved candidacy, and I thought for myself [that I] brought

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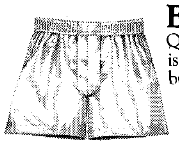

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disaster to another man not involved in no way with my projects. . . . When I was going out, all my friends shouted viva Luis Salas, in other circumstances may be that could be welcomed, this time I did *not* feel anything but remorse, knew very deep on me that I had wronged another human being." During the intervening years, Salas wrote, he had been unable to forget the look in the eyes of that strong, silent man, and ever since "the only remorse I feel is . . . for what we did to Coke Stevenson."

Indeed, Luis Salas relates in "Box 13," Sam Smithwick was not the only deputy sheriff from Alice who wrote Coke Stevenson a letter. He, Luis Salas, had written him also, Salas says. "I wrote him a letter asking forgivings, but he never answered."

"I don't blame him," Luis Salas said.

WHATEVER Salas' motives for writing "Box 13," that manuscript—and his interview with me—adds details to the story of the 1948 election. The manuscript names the men who he says actually added the two hundred votes—Deputy Sheriffs Willie Mancha and Ignacio (Nachito) Escobar—and explains why Salas refused George Parr's request that he add the votes himself. "I did not want them in my handwriting"; certifying the votes involved merely "giving another total," so he agreed to do that. "That night in the dark corridors of the Adams Building a President of the United States was made," Salas wrote. Parr called off names from the poll list, and asked Salas if the person had voted, and if Salas said the person had not voted Mancha would add that name to the poll list while Escobar added a Johnson vote to the tally sheet. The manuscript explains the two added votes for Stevenson: after they reached the requested two hundred figure, "Nachito was a jolly man full of jokes, he said, let us give this poor man a *pilón* [bonus], and he added two votes making a total of 202." As for whether he, Luis Salas, had on Election Night reported the Johnson total as seven hundred and sixty-five, Salas wrote that of course he had: "I told Cliff Dubose. . . . Dinky Price was there, and he heard me. . . . Price was right, so there you are if the investigation had continued, they could easily had me indicted."

I asked Salas if I could copy the manuscript and use the information in it in this account, and when Salas agreed we went to a nearby stationery store and copied it on a Xerox machine. "Everyone is dead except me, Robert," he said. "And I'm not going to live long. But Box 13 is history. No one can erase that." (Salas died eleven months later.)

ON the point in his 1977 statement to the Associated Press on which attention had focussed—whether or not Lyndon Johnson himself had come to George Parr's office to ask for two hundred more votes—Salas said that he had recognized Johnson, because, during Johnson's campaign trip to Alice, Salas had been ill in bed and Johnson's campaign workers had brought the candidate to Salas' house to meet this man who was so important to his hopes in the Valley.

On this point, Salas could be lying. Or he could be mistaken—given his very imperfect English, that is a strong possibility; he may simply have misunderstood the introduction of the man who came to his home. Or, on that campaign trip to the Valley, a Johnson aide who physically resembled the candidate could have done in Salas' home what his pilot Joe Mashman did in shouting greetings from Johnson's helicopter during the campaign: pretend he was Johnson to someone who could not tell the difference. Or Salas could be telling the truth; Johnson might have come to San Diego himself to ask for votes.

But the point is not nearly so significant as Johnson's partisans have made it appear. Although there is still a dispute over whether Johnson asked in person for the final, decisive two hundred votes to be added to his total, there can no longer, thanks to the confirmation, in Salas' manuscript and interviews, of the sworn testimony of others, be any reasonable doubt that two hundred votes *were* added to that total—six days after the election. Cliff DuBose had testified that Salas originally gave the total as seven hundred and sixty-five, and Price had also testified that the total given was seven hundred and sixty-five. The only doubt about that fact had been cast by Salas' denial when he testified. And now Salas was admitting that he had lied: "I told Cliff 765."

The two hundred votes that "changed history" are, in fact, once one retreats from the headlines, significant only because of their decisive timing. Thanks to Salas, there is no longer any doubt that in his Box 13 alone far more than two hundred votes were stolen for Lyndon Johnson. A reform poll watcher, Jimmy Holmgreen, had previously said so: "I saw dozens of votes that were for Stevenson counted for Johnson." Ike Poole had previously said so. And now Salas was saying so: "If they were not for Johnson, I make them for Johnson."

Even Box 13 as a whole, notorious as it became in American political legend, is hardly unique. In that precinct, votes were counted for Johnson although they had actually been cast for Stevenson, and further votes were counted for Johnson although nobody had cast them at all. But, as Johnson's political man-of-all-work, San Antonio Postmaster Daniel J. Quill, put it, "there were dozens of Box 13s in the Valley." Duval County gave Johnson 4,622 votes, and even the rudimentary investigation cut short by Justice Black's order showed that a high percentage of those votes had never actually been cast at all. The testimony in Zapata County had been presenting the same picture. In the three counties investigated by the federal masters, therefore, the evidence was overwhelming that a high percentage of the 7,279 votes counted in Lyndon Johnson's totals were not cast at all or were cast for Stevenson. Similar conditions had prevailed in Starr County, which had given Johnson 3,038 votes. In the areas in which George Parr could have election officials write down figures at his pleasure—Duval, Starr, La Salle, Jim Hogg, Zapata, and Brooks Counties, and Box 13 in Jim Wells County—Johnson received a total of 11,133 votes, Stevenson, 1,004, so Johnson's plurality in these areas was more than ten thousand votes. And what of the rest of George Parr's domain—his key "boxes" in Corpus Christi, which produced three thousand Johnson votes, for example? What of Judge Raymond's Laredo? No investigation was conducted there, but no Johnson adviser in a position to know suggests seriously that the 5,554 votes (a 4,400-vote plurality) Johnson received in Webb County were "level." Johnson came out of the Valley with an over-all total of 43,409 votes to 19,367 for Stevenson. How many of those 43,409 votes can be said to have been "stolen," and how many can be said to have been honestly cast for Lyndon Johnson cannot, after forty years, be determined. But from the pattern revealed in the brief investigation allowed at the time, it is apparent that the overwhelming majority of those votes fall into the "stolen" category.

As for San Antonio, Johnson's deputies on the West Side themselves boasted of the votes that were, in their euphemistic phrase, "changed over" for him there between the primaries, and the estimate most frequently given was ten thousand, although a more conservative estimate would put the number at about eight thousand. And what of other areas in the state—Houston, for example—where investigations were requested but never made? Not eighty-seven votes "changed history," and not two hundred, but thousands—many thousands, in fact.

Did Johnson ask in person—or just over the telephone, or just through men like Wirtz and Looney and Clark—for these votes? Johnson's followers deny Luis Salas' contention that in the case of Box 13 Johnson asked in person. But that denial would be significant only if it proved not merely that those particular votes were not stolen at Johnson's personal request but that he had no personal knowledge of what was going on in the Valley as a whole, and in San Antonio. And nobody is seriously suggesting that.

IN 1983, the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library obtained another item that might have been of interest in analyzing the 1948 senatorial election. It was an oral-history interview given in that year by William Robert Smith, the federal master who had presided over the Precinct 13 hearing. Smith's oral history leaves little doubt of what his report to Judge Davidson would have said, had not Justice Black's ruling forced him to terminate his hearing. More important, it makes a point that articles on the election almost invariably overlook, possibly because it was completely blurred by Johnson's oratory. Salas' confession in 1977 that he had lied on the witness stand had come as no surprise to him, Smith told the oral-history interviewer: "I thought at the time he was lying." When the precinct election judge testified that he had gone to the Alice *News* office on the night of the primary and had not given the precinct's election returns to the reporter, "I didn't believe a word of that, because that's what he went there for," Smith said. "I figured what the hell was Salas doing there if he wasn't there to give them the election returns."

But the lie that he, the master, had found most significant was Salas' statement that he had lost the poll list and other records of the election. "I didn't believe a word of it," Smith told the interviewer. He "kept telling how these poll lists had been stolen and misplaced." That lie, to Smith, was pivotal, because the failure to produce the records was, to his mind, the crucial point in the case:

> There's one thing that kept going through my mind during that whole hearing, which I thought was probably the most potent fact in the case.... At the hearing before Judge Davidson, the hearing before that old Judge [Archer] in Austin, and the hearing before the State Democratic Committee, if Stevenson were wrong about the illegally added votes, all the Johnson forces had to do was to bring the election poll list and the election return [tally sheet] of Precinct 13 and show it to them, that there hadn't been anything added, but they never did it. They never did do it. And if they had wanted to defeat Stevenson in the hearing before me, all they'd have to do is bring the official poll records of Precinct 13 of that day's voting and put them before me as proof. Of course, they may have done it later, but I didn't think they were going to. They hadn't ever produced it anywhere else. And to me, that was the most potent fact in the whole case, the fact that they had not brought these things in. That would have been a perfect way to refute the allegation of Stevenson. But they never did do it.

Smith had opened the ballot boxes in the hope of finding the Precinct 13 poll list, "but I didn't expect to find it," he said. "If I had found it, I probably would have fainted. I didn't think it was going to be in there." And, of course, it wasn't.

Smith was asked what his report to Judge Davidson would have said: "What are your conclusions?"

"I was very much of the opinion that

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the Stevenson people were right. . . . I firmly believe and have for years that the election was stolen in Precinct 13. I'm now convinced that [the votes] were added, 202 of them, after the polls closed. . . . I think Lyndon was put in the United States Senate with a stolen election, and I think he and everybody else knew it."

This statement by the federal master in chancery is the most definitive word available on Precinct 13, since his report would have been the basis for Judge Davidson's ruling on whether or not to keep Lyndon Johnson's name off the ballot.

AT first—as long as an investigation of the result of the 1948 election was still a possibility—Johnson's reaction to what had happened was defensiveness. No sooner was he safely seated in the Senate, however, than the defensiveness faded and was replaced by boasting.

As was customary with Johnson, the reaction was embodied in homey anecdotes and jokes—particularly in one joke, source unknown, that had begun circulating in Texas almost as soon as the election was over. Lyndon Johnson brought it to Washington and popularized it, telling it at Georgetown parties, in the Senate cloakroom, on the Senate floor, and repeating it even to reporters, who printed it. The story was related with evident enjoyment, and with the flair of a master storyteller, complete with accent. The accent was that of a small Mexican-American boy, named, variously, Manuel or Jesús. As Lyndon Johnson told the story, Manuel was sitting on a curb in a little town near the Mexican border one day and crying, when a friend came up and asked him what the trouble was.

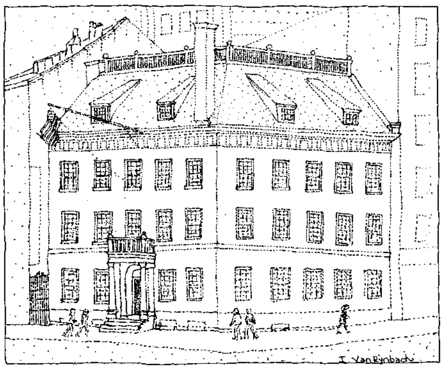
"My father was in town last Saturday, and he did not come to see me," Manuel replied.

"But, Manuel, your father has been dead for ten years."

Manuel just sobbed louder. "*Sí*, he has been dead for ten years. But he came to town last Saturday to vote for Lyndon Johnson, and he did not come to see me."

The reaction was also embodied in an imitation, carried off with the flair of the great mimic that Johnson was. The imitation, performed at Georgetown dinner tables and in Senate Office Building hideaways, before audiences that included fellow-senators and reporters, was of George Parr. Cranking up an invisible old-fashioned two-piece telephone, Johnson would pretend to be Parr calling on Election Night, and shouting over the staticky connection between South Texas and Austin: "Lyndon, this is George. George Parr! Can you hear me, Lyndon? Can you hear me?" Johnson would act out his own role: "Yes, yes, go ahead, George." Then Johnson would imitate Parr reporting the election results, always ridiculously lopsided in favor of Johnson. "Well, thank you, George," Lyndon Johnson would say, with a grin. "That's mighty nice." The imitation was "one of Lyndon Johnson's sidesplitting acts," says the Washington columnist Hugh Sidey. "Johnson was funny imitating Parr. The thought of Parr was funny." And, of course, Johnson's reaction was embodied in his nickname.

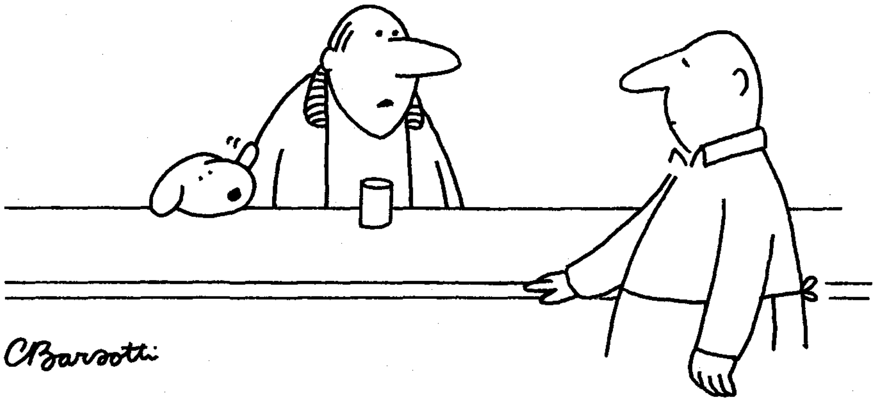
The identity of the coiner of that nickname cannot be definitely established, and it may have been Lyndon Johnson himself. But Johnson was among those who popularized it and made it a familiar part of the slang of insider Washington. "From the start, he disarmed suspicious senators he did not know by sticking out a hand and saying, 'Howdy, I'm Landslide Lyndon,' " Alfred Steinberg, a Johnson biographer and a reporter who covered Capitol Hill, in the nineteen-forties, wrote. During the first weeks after Johnson returned to Washington following the election, fellow-senators and friends would pick up the telephone to hear him drawl, "This is Landslide Lyndon calling." In April, 1949, when the House had passed by a 176–174 vote legislation he wanted favoring natural-gas producers, the Fort Worth *Star-Telegram* stated that Johnson "rushed to the phone and reported to his chief ally, Senator Bob Kerr of Oklahoma: 'We won by two votes—"Landslide" Johnson rides again.' "



Within a very short time, he stopped using the nickname, came to dislike it, and more than once flew into a rage at someone who used it. But it was too late to erase it from Washington's consciousness: the nickname was too vivid, and it had been circulated too widely. And he never completely stopped telling the 1948-related anecdotes and jokes, and doing the George Parr imitation. Most contested intrastate elections are not items of intense interest in Washington. Who, for example, would remember even a year or two later that another new senator elected in 1948, Robert S. Kerr of Oklahoma, had also been charged with election irregularities? Loud though Kerr may have been on most subjects, he was discreet on that one. Texas' 1948 campaign hadn't been followed particularly closely in Washington except by Johnson intimates; awareness of that campaign would normally have faded rather quickly. Instead, awareness grew, and became vivid. The jokes, the anecdotes, and the nickname had made it well known, had kept the campaign in Washington's mind. Johnson's repetition of the anecdotes had, moreover, let Washington know that there was at least some truth in Stevenson's charges; Johnson's portrayal of Parr's telephone calls, for example, would hardly have led a listener to believe the charges were untrue. If there was anyone in Washington political circles who didn't know that the 1948 campaign was a good story, it was not Lyndon Johnson's fault. And everyone did seem to know. It was at least in part because of him that the magazine articles in 1951 and 1952 which brought him to the nation's attention focussed so strongly on that campaign. As years passed, the campaign became a minor American political legend—a legend with a decided tint of crookedness. And for some years the memory was kept vivid by the very man who had allegedly done the stealing. People hearing him reminisce about the campaign, or watching the grins and winks with which he joked and talked, could hardly escape getting the impression that the election *had* been stolen, and that he was not ashamed of that fact. Far from it. The impression he conveyed was of a politician who had outsmarted an opponent, done something illegal, and hadn't been caught.

Among Washington insiders, Lyndon Johnson had long been known as a political manipulator, a "wheeler-dealer." But this image had been unknown to the public at large—because Lyndon Johnson had been unknown to the public at large. So, by relating the 1948 campaign in detail, magazines first conveyed to a nationwide public the impression of Johnson as a manipulator, a schemer, a somewhat unprincipled and unscrupulous wheeler-dealer, a deceiver proud of his deceits. First impressions are strong, and hard to dispel.

The image would become very important to Johnson's later career. But even more important was the fact that he had deliberately created and cultivated the image—because it was the image he wanted to project. The poignant reason he had wanted this image—the reason it had been terribly important to Lyndon Johnson that he be known as calculating, shrewd, tough, hard, ruthless, "practical" in even the most uncomplimentary connotations of that word—was all too easy to understand to anyone familiar with his heredity and with the carefully concealed circumstances of his terrible youth. He had been a "Johnson": a member of a family despised because it did not possess, in the term that mattered most in the Texas Hill Country, "common sense." In particular, he had been the son of a man whose honesty and idealism had led him into ruin and disgrace and the road-building gang, and had led his son into the road gang, too. Lyndon's little brother, Sam Houston, who understood Lyndon so well, said, "It was most important to Lyndon not to be like Daddy." Lyndon Johnson had to prove that he possessed the "common sense" his father had lacked. He needed respect for his pragmatism—needed it passionately—even if obtaining it meant portraying himself as a wheeler-dealer, a politician in the worst sense of the word. Had the public been aware of the humiliations of the early life of Lyndon Johnson, there might have been at least a measure of understanding of the pain-filled motivation behind the image. But there was no such understanding. There was only the image. Alvin Wirtz had been worried that Coke Stevenson's lawsuit would "black mark" Lyndon Johnson. In a sense, Lyndon Johnson had black marked himself.



"And a bag of peanuts."

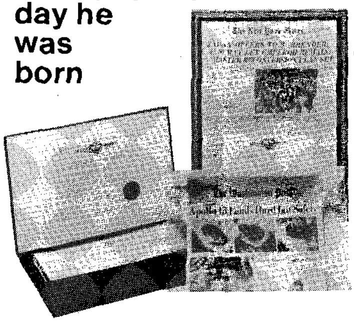
When, in the mid-nineteen-fifties, Johnson began maneuvering for the Presidency, he attempted to dispel the impression he himself had done so much to create of the circumstances surrounding the 1948 election. By 1964, running against Barry Goldwater, he was stating that the 1948 election had been honest, and that his margin of victory had been the result of Lady Bird's last-minute telephoning. But he was never able fully to restrain himself from gloating about his cleverness in defeating Coke Stevenson. In 1967, Ronnie Dugger, a Texas journalist and longtime critic who was writing a biography of Johnson, interviewed the President in his bedroom in the White House. The topic was not the 1948 campaign, but Johnson, "rambling about other subjects," suddenly interrupted himself and told Dugger he wanted to show him something. Going into Lady Bird's adjoining bedroom, he rummaged through a closet and, after five or ten minutes, returned, "beaming," with a photograph. The photograph is of five smiling men gathered around the hood of an automobile with a "Texas-48" license plate. Balanced on the hood of the car is a ballot box, marked "Precinct 13." The men are Jim Wells County Deputy Sheriff Stokes Micenheimer; Sheriff Hubert Sain; George Parr's cousin Givens Parr; Ed Lloyd, the attorney who ran Jim Wells County for Parr, and who was Johnson's leader there; and another Johnson ally in Jim Wells, Barney Goldthorn. As Johnson returned with the photograph, "he held it forward to me with a kind of pride," Dugger wrote. "The President watched my face as I searched the photograph for its meaning," and "as I got it . . . he grinned at me with a vast inner enjoyment."

Dugger asked the President for details about the picture, including "when it had been taken," but Johnson said not a word and "carried the picture back to its place in his wife's room." Some years later, however, Dugger mentioned the photograph to Luis Salas. "Yes, I know the one you mean," Salas said, and he found his own copy of it. He showed it to Dugger, and said that it had been taken on the day of the second primary in 1948—before the polls closed.

For a President to preserve as a personal memento a photograph showing the notorious Box 13 in the possession of his political allies—a photograph that by implication proves that someone was indeed in a position to stuff it—is startling in itself. For him to display the photograph to a critical journalist is evidence of a psychological need so deep that its demands could not be resisted. It is continuing evidence of the fact that not even Lyndon Johnson's possession of the Presidency had eased the insecurities of his youth.

THE 1948 Texas senatorial campaign marked the end of the old ways in Texas politics and the beginning of the new.

The Johnson campaign taught Texas politicians the power of the media. "After that," as Johnson's 1948 campaign aide Horace Busby puts it, "they saw that the way to reach the state was through radio." And, of course, the state was becoming more urban, less rural: "the exodus from the small towns had started." So in subsequent statewide campaigns candidates no longer campaigned as Coke Stevenson had campaigned in 1948. They no



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longer drove from one small town to the next. "You no longer made the circuit," Busby said. "The campaigning in the courthouse square died out. Coke's campaign was the last campaign of that kind ever waged in Texas."

Busby was speaking as he sat in a restaurant in Washington, D.C., looking back on the campaign of almost forty years before. He had been talking about it for several hours, and now he stopped. Then, after a long pause, he said he had one more point to make. "You should understand," he said. "Coke was good quality. He was a good-quality legislator, lieutenant governor, governor." There was another pause. "You should understand," Busby said. "He wasn't as bad as we cut him up to be."

But the story of Coke Stevenson was not over when the fight for the Senate seat ended. It was to continue for twenty-seven more years, more than a quarter of a century, for he lived until 1975, when he was eighty-seven. That number therefore had a double significance in his life.

After Justice Black handed down his ruling, Stevenson went back to his ranch—and his old life. His wife had died in 1942, and a longtime friend, hunting companion, and fellow-widower, Emil Loeffler, a former mayor of Junction, moved in with him. Until she died in 1952, Stevenson's mother, who was in her eighties, would visit him for several weeks at a time; every morning, he would rise at four to read, cook the cornbread his mother liked, eat breakfast with her, and then, after washing the dishes, drive her around the ranch. Later, while she napped, he would do his chores, but only those that could be done near the house; during his mother's visits he was never out of earshot of the house.

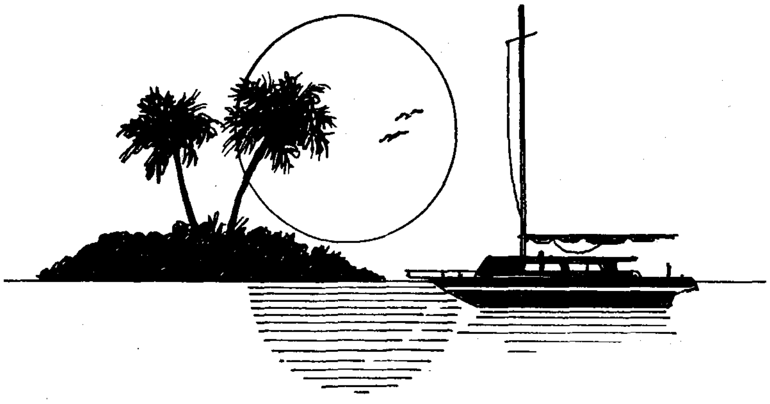
He had lost none of his desire to improve the ranch, which he now expanded to more than fifteen thousand acres: he sunk the poles for new fences and corrals, sledgehammering a hundred and twenty posts into the hard Kimble County rock himself, because the work was so hard that he could hire nobody to do it. He practiced law from an office in Junction (he still refused to install a telephone on the ranch; prospective clients who couldn't find him in town had to drive out to the ranch), becoming a familiar figure again in the old Kimble County Courthouse. (To avoid any hint that he was using his influence with state officials, he took cases mainly for Kimble County families he had known over the years "for fees," as he told a reporter, "that I could write on a blackboard in my office for all to see and not be ashamed of a single one of them.") Many of the state's conservative business leaders had, once the excitement of the campaign had faded, reached the same conclusion as Busby, and realized they had been unjust to Stevenson, and they asked him to run—ample financing assured—for Tom Connally's Senate seat in 1952; he would, after all, be only sixty-four years old, they pointed out. He declined. "I would not want to be the junior senator to Lyndon Johnson," he said. "It just wouldn't work. My belief in principles is too strong." He might run again, he said, but against Johnson—in 1954, when Johnson came up for reëlection. To his friends, however, it was obvious that Stevenson had no enthusiasm for reëntering politics. "He hadn't lost interest in politics—he still read the news magazines, and all—but he had lost interest in his participation in politics," his nephew, Bob Murphey, says. The stacks of mail—heavier than ever, containing now not only pleas for him to run but information on alleged 1948 vote frauds in scores of counties—piled up on the kitchen table, unanswered. His friends felt he was considering the race mainly because life on the ranch was, again, too lonely.

And then, in 1951, there was a new county clerk in the courthouse. As a girl growing up on a Kimble County ranch, Marguerite King had been noted for her intelligence ("She was one of the brilliant ones," a friend recalls) and for her ability as a rider and as a rifle shot ("I learned to shoot before I could hold the stock steady against my shoulder: I'd lean it on a rock or something," she says), but she had been nicknamed Teeney because she was barely five feet tall. Since then, she had left the Hill Country as one of the few young women from that isolated area to attend Baylor University, had married, and had been widowed when her husband, a pilot, had been shot down over Europe; and now, thirty-three years old, she had returned to Junction with her young son. But she was still petite and her nickname had stuck. Teeney was very quiet and serious, usually staying home reading ("biography, history—anything," she says. "I tried to read a hundred books a year"), but beneath the quietness was determination. In 1951, when the Kimble county clerk resigned, Teeney was appointed to replace him, becoming the first woman in the county's history to serve in that post, and in 1952 she was elected to a full term.

The new county clerk was strikingly attractive: slender and shapely, with keen blue eyes, what friends called a "whipped-cream complexion," and glowing, tightly curled golden hair. Her friends kept suggesting the names of eligible young men to her, but they weren't interesting, she said; they didn't have anything to talk about. They didn't read.

She was still new to the job when, one day, Coke Stevenson came into her office to file a case, and she was unfamiliar with the procedures involved. She would never forget the quiet, calm, "*kind*" way he explained them to her. Then they began to chat. Recalling that day many years later, she says simply, "We found we had many things in common to talk about." Stevenson was in the courthouse frequently, of course, and they had more talks. "He loved his ranch and his land," she recalls, "and he asked me if I'd like to come riding and see it. I would do that, and we would picnic on the river. That was how it all started, I guess."

He invited her to go deer hunting, and that proved a little embarrassing: famous hunter though Coke was, Teeney turned out to be the better shot. He was very good with her son, Dennis, then nine years old; years later, Marguerite would recall that Coke was a "gifted speaker, whether to an audience of hundreds concerning the serious affairs of the state or nation, or to one little boy begging for the fiftieth time, 'Tell me about the time you shot the bear.' " One day, when Bob Murphey came for a visit, there was a beautiful woman with his uncle. She seemed tiny beside Coke's height and big shoulders, and was much younger. But Murphey realized that that didn't matter. "I'll never forget the way she looked at him, and the way he looked at her. Uncle Coke was in love, and Teeney was in love with him." On



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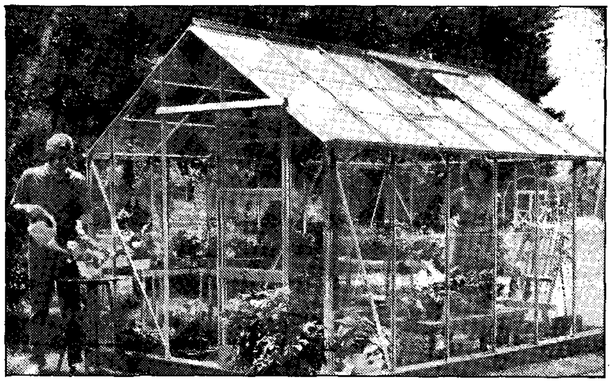

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January 16, 1954, without telling anyone—for Teeney hated "fuss" as much as Coke did—they slipped into a little church and asked the minister to marry them. (When the Junction *Eagle* learned of the wedding, the lead on its article told something of the near-reverence in which the bridegroom was held: "Saturday, for the second time, Coke R. Stevenson, lawyer-ranchman and former Governor, took a bride from among his own people.")

After they were married, when Coke rode out over his ranch, Teeney rode beside him; she was a good enough rider so that when he was working with cattle she could work with him, although she couldn't handle his big brown "cutting horse," Nellie, and Coke found her a black named Elgin with a very smooth gait. When he was doing work with which she couldn't help, such as clearing cedar or driving fenceposts, she would pack a lunch and bring it to him, and sit by him as he worked. Teeney seemed to want to spend every minute with Coke. Late in the afternoons, they would swim in that beautiful river, with the herons and the cranes standing nearby, and the deer coming down to drink.

And as for Coke, he was a different man—or, rather, he was the man he had been when he was young and had driven his car down the middle of the South Llano River on a bet. "I'm going to say a word about Mr. Stevenson now that you wouldn't believe," Bob Murphey says. " 'Bubbly.' Uncle Coke was just *bubbling*. He just worshipped her." Murphey had a wife himself now, and she says, "He never walked in the kitchen that he didn't grab her and squeeze her and give her a big kiss. They were just so *happy* with each other!" Other friends, visiting the ranch, would watch Teeney and Coke reading together and talking. "They had the same kind of humor, the same way of looking at things," Ernest Boyett says. "That dry way of observing people. They could sit and talk for hours. If that wasn't happiness, I don't know what was."

And when, on January 16, 1956, the second anniversary of their marriage, their daughter, Jane, was born, Coke Stevenson's love for the little girl became, for the people of the Hill Country, a part of the story that during his own lifetime was a legend to the people of Texas.

As soon as Jane was old enough to understand, Stevenson began telling her stories—wonderful stories—about the history of the United States, and of Texas, and of Greece and Rome. And when Jane was nine, Coke and Teeney started showing her history for herself. They had read her the accounts of the Alamo, of course, and of the battle of San Jacinto and Goliad and Sabine Pass, and they took her to all those sites, but they also ranged farther afield. The three of them followed the trails of Lewis and Clark—"and many Western trails we never hear of," Teeney recalls. "Coke knew all the trails." There was the Revolution and the Founding Fathers, and there were trips to Mount Vernon and Monticello, and there were the Civil War battlefields—everything that made up the history that Coke Stevenson loved. And there was a trip to a place nearer home. Coming home from school one evening when she was eleven, Jane told her father and mother that her class had begun studying how the state government worked. Coke took her to Austin so she could see it work for herself; once again, there was the whisper in the halls of the capitol, "Coke Stevenson's here," and people came out of their offices into the halls to see a tall, erect old man holding by the hand a skinny little girl in pigtails.

A reporter who spent several days with Coke when Jane was twelve was struck by the slim, pretty girl and by her relationship with her father. "Stevenson is gentle-voiced with her, calls her baby," the reporter wrote. "And you sense her love for the man who is big in her history books." And when she was a teen-ager Coke Stevenson made for Jane what was, for him the ultimate sacrifice. Newspapers across Texas chronicled it in amazement: "A telephone has been installed on the Coke Stevenson Ranch." "Well," Stevenson said, "you know how teenagers are."

"He idolized that girl. He told me many times that he hoped he would live to see her grown," Bob Murphey says. He lived to see her nineteen years old and married to a young rancher. And not only did Coke live to a great age, respected throughout the Hill Country, a prophet with honor in his own country, but it wasn't until the last three or four years of his life that his health began to fail. A reporter who went to see him in 1959 wrote that, "at 71, the Governor of Texas does hard manual labor six days a week." All through the nineteen-sixties, as he neared eighty, he seemed never to be ill, and he ranged to Wyoming and Montana to hunt elk. And he still worked on his ranch. He had decided to build at least rough roads connecting its fifteen thousand acres, and he did—ninety miles of them—and he took pride in every mile. He never lost his desire to learn new methods; deciding, in about 1963, when he was seventy-five, that he wanted to build a large garage for his tractors and other ranch machinery, he decided also that he wanted to build it without supporting columns, so that maneuvering the vehicles would be simpler. Sending away for architectural textbooks, he taught himself the science of cantilevered construction, studying these books as eagerly as, fifty years before, he had studied books to teach himself accounting and law and highway construction. He never lost his self-reliance, and his happiness and pride when he did something on his own. And, as for the law, "Well, Coke just *loved* the practice of law," Teeney says. "And he had just the pick of cases now, from all over the state." She says that when he got a new case that was difficult—where the legalities were complicated—he was as enthusiastic and as eager about studying up on the law involved as he had been when he had first started reading law books. His love of his land, the land he had saved so long to buy, and his pride in the improvements he had made on it were so deep that visitors constantly commented on it. Taken on a tour, a guest remarked on the clarity of the water in a large "tank," or pond. "I built that," the host said. He had built it twenty years before, he said. The water was so clear because he had lined the pond with caliche, which he had lugged from another section of the ranch. "Sure," he said in response to the guest's question. "It was a *lot* of work. But, wasn't it *worth* it?" If there was a single aspect of the ranch that was dearest to him—with the exception of the falls of the South Llano ("How he loved that river!" Teeney would recall) it was the springs that kept the ranch green and his cattle watered even during droughts that turned the rest of the Hill Country brown. Every time he discovered a new spring, his enthusiasm over the discovery would be as full and pure as the excitement of a young boy.

The love between Coke and Teeney was striking, too, as was the contentment they brought to each other. They were to have twenty-one years together, and they seemed to fall only more and more in love. When he rode his ranch, by horse or car, inspecting it or cutting out cattle, Teeney still rode with him; when he was doing work in which she couldn't participate, she would still come, carrying lunch, and sit near hear him for hours as he worked. She began doing some of the research for his legal cases, so she was part of his life in the law, too. Says a friend: "It seemed like they couldn't bear to be apart for a minute."

COKE STEVENSON and Lyndon Johnson never saw each other again. Stevenson's contempt for Johnson never faded, and occasionally it surfaced. Asked once, during Johnson's 1964 campaign for the Presidency, to evaluate him, he said, after a long pause, "Well, of course, he is a very, how should I say, skillful politician," and dropped the subject except to say that he himself would vote for Goldwater. "I've been waiting a long time to see a turn toward conservatism." Those who knew him well knew that there were still scars from the 1948 campaign.

But the scars were smoothed over by happiness. From the day Teeney agreed to marry him, Stevenson never again thought seriously about running in the 1954 campaign against Johnson, or in any other campaign. He simply had no interest in public office. His dream, after all, the dream he had conceived during nights long ago on the Brady-Junction trail, when six horses were all he owned, had not been to be governor or senator. His dream had been to be a rancher. And now he was enjoying the realization of that dream. "He would have made a great senator," Teeney says. "But he loved his ranch, and the life out here, and he *loved* practicing law. His life out here was more meaningful for him than it would have been any other way. And he knew that. He understood himself."

A columnist for the Dallas *News*, Frank X. Tolbert, came to visit the former Governor. Observing Stevenson's joy in the ranch, witnessing the enthusiasm with which he still planned and built each new improvement and seeing the serenity of the quiet evenings by the river he loved, the affection between him and his wife and the love and respect in which he was held by wife, daughter, friends—by everyone around him—Tolbert wrote, "After spending some time with Coke Robert Stevenson . . . here by the green, rushing river, I'm wondering if he wasn't lucky to lose that Senate race by 87 votes."

Those who knew Coke Stevenson didn't wonder. Bob Murphey, who knew better than anyone else how hard his Uncle Coke had tried to win the Senate race, says, "Thinking back on it now, I truly believe that getting beat for the Senate and marrying Teeney was the best thing that could have happened to him." And a reporter who came to do an article on the former Governor in 1969, when Stevenson was eighty-one years old, didn't wonder. After watching Teeney come to meet Coke, the reporter wrote, "You sense . . . a protective motherly manner as she approaches her gray bear of a husband." Not that her husband seemed to need protection; he worked, the reporter wrote, "like a ditchdigger." Teeney insisted that Coke show the reporter the historic marker that had been erected by the Texas State Historical Commission on the lawn of the Kimble County Courthouse. The marker had been placed in honor of a Texas institution. "TEXAS STATESMAN COKE R. STEVENSON," it began. "STRONG, RESOURCEFUL, CONSERVATIVE GOVERNOR . . ." The reporter realized that he was talking to "the only man in Texas who can look out his office window and see his own monument." He realized how proud Stevenson was of the marker—at least partly because it bore the key word. "A conservative—he's one who holds things together," Stevenson told the reporter. "He shouldn't fight all progressive movements, but he should be the balance wheel to hold the movement to where it won't get out of hand." He *had* been a conservative governor, he said. "When I left office, I left a thirty-five-million-dollar surplus." He mentioned the old-age pensions he had tripled and the public-welfare payments he had increased and his prison reforms and the more humane treatment in state institutions for the insane, and the reporter realized

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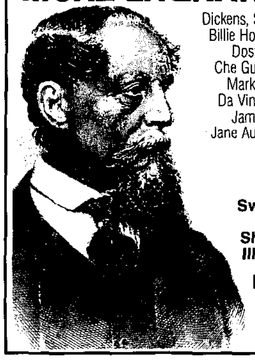

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HANDMADE IN EGYPT

how proud Coke Stevenson was of his whole life. Then Teeney and Coke drove the reporter out to the ranch, and he saw the house, and the love with which it was filled.

Finally, they went down to the river. A rowboat was there, and Coke explained that "Jane rows upstream, me downstream," and Teeney broke in to say, with a smile, "Then they both get tired, and I have to row." A recent flash flood had changed the contours of the banks, and as the boat moved along, Coke Stevenson, eighty-one years old, suddenly jumped up in the boat and shouted, pointing excitedly at an Indian burial mound that the flood had uncovered. And there were springs, new springs. "There's another one," he said. "And look! There's another!"

"He takes in the whole scene, waterfalls and deer and turkey and gentle flow of river," the whole panorama of the beautiful canyon, the reporter wrote. And then, still standing up in the boat, Coke Stevenson threw his arms wide, in a gesture of triumph and joy.

UNITED STATES senators are sworn in in groups of four, and at ten minutes past noon on January 3, 1949, Lyndon Baines Johnson, with his wife and John Connally and Horace Busby and Warren G. Woodward watching from the crowded galleries above, walked down the Senate's red-carpeted center aisle beside Burnet R. Maybank, of South Carolina, who was being sworn in for a new term, and two senators-elect, like himself—Robert S. Kerr, of Oklahoma, and Estes Kefauver, of Tennessee. Standing stiffly above them on the dais, his right palm upraised, Arthur H. Vandenberg, of Michigan, the Senate's president pro tem, read the oath: "Do you solemnly swear that you will support and defend the Constitution of the United States . . ." The four replied together, "I do." Then, after stepping to the clerks' desk, below Vandenberg, and signing his name in the Senate Register, Johnson walked to his seat, in the last row on the Democratic side of the chamber. Later that day, sitting in his new offices in front of a high arched window that framed the Mall and the Washington Monument, he was interviewed by Margaret Mayer, of the Austin *American-Statesman*, who had followed him through most of his long campaign. Mayer asked him "if it had all been worth it." He nodded, and winked. Then he strode out of his office and down the corridor to the elevator. He rang the elevator bell three times—the signal that a senator was waiting.

The Senate into which Lyndon Johnson was sworn was dominated by seniority. Power resided in the Senate "club," or "inner circle," which consisted largely of the chairmen and ranking members of the Senate's great standing committees, and of four party leaders—two floor leaders and two assistant floor leaders, or whips—who, unlike the Speaker of the House, were not formal officials of the Senate but, in effect, held the limited powers that the committee barons deigned to allow them. The sole basis for accession to a chairmanship was length of service in the Senate. A vacant chairmanship went to the man of the majority party who had been longest on that committee, and once a man became chairman the post was his for the duration of his political life. Nothing, not even senility, could change that. As a result, six of the fifteen committee chairmen were in their fourth, fifth, or sixth Senate terms. Neither energy nor ability could circumvent the seniority rule. To become a leader in the Senate, it seemed, required waiting—years of waiting.

Within just two years, in January, 1951, Lyndon Johnson became a leader, his party's whip: an assistant floor leader who, moreover, very quickly began to invest that theretofore largely titular role with new significance. Just two years later, in January, 1953, he became *the* leader of his party—only the minority leader, since the Democrats had lost control of the Senate, but nonetheless the youngest floor leader in the Senate's history. From that seat in the back row he had moved in only four years to the Democratic leader's front-row, center-aisle seat, sitting at the head of men who had served as many terms in that body as he had served years. And within weeks of his election as leader he began to revolutionize some of the Senate's most sacrosanct traditions in order to concentrate the barons' prerogatives in his own hands. By 1955, with the barons' power broken and the Democrats back in the majority, Lyndon Johnson was the most powerful Senate majority leader in history. —ROBERT A. CARO

(This concludes a series of articles.)

THE CURRENT CINEMA

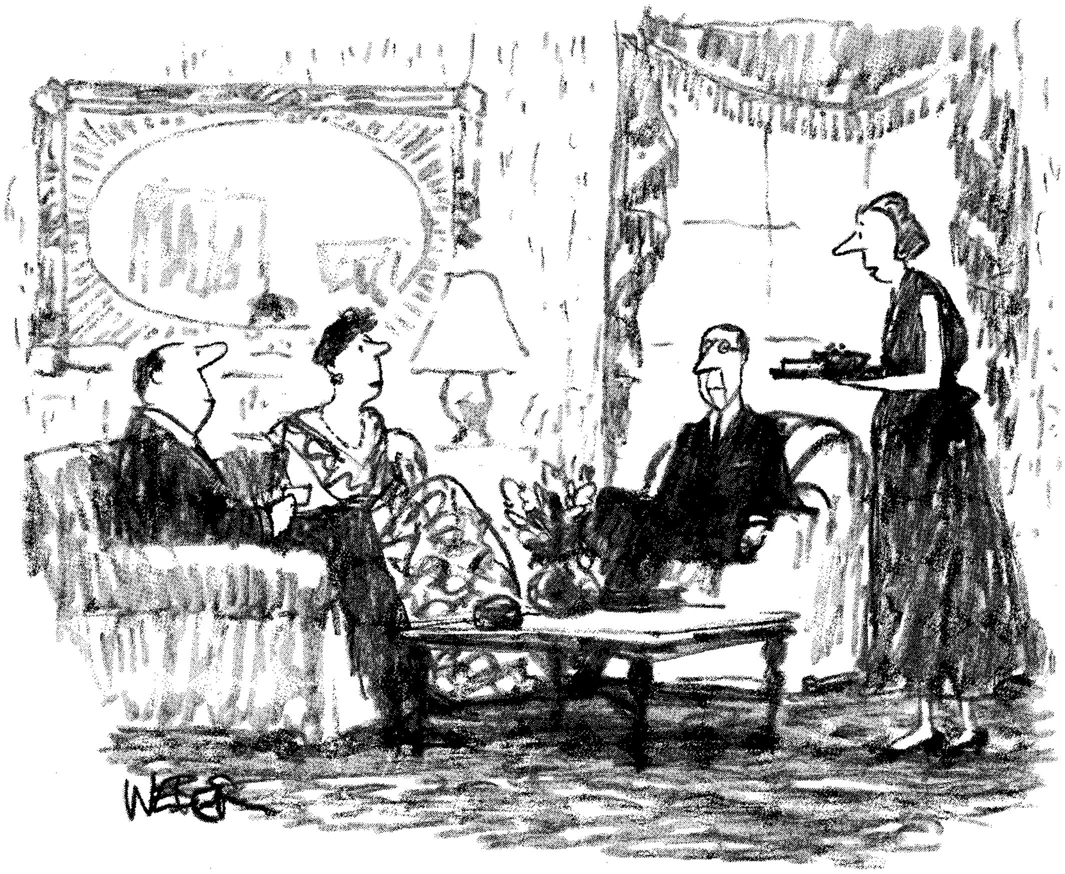
The 54th

THE Civil War epic "Glory" is based on fiery, spirit-stirring material that has never before been tapped for the movies. On January 1, 1863, the Emancipation Proclamation became law, and a few weeks later the first black fighting unit to be formed in the North during the Civil War—the 54th Regiment of Massachusetts Volunteer Infantry—began assembling. The visionary plan, conceived by the abolitionists, with President Lincoln's blessing, was to prove that black men had the discipline and valor to stand up against the enemy. Roughly a thousand freedmen and escaped slaves signed up. Two of Frederick Douglass's sons were among the enlisted, and the white officers, who came from prominent anti-slavery families, included a brother of Henry and William James. The twenty-five-year-old colonel in command of the regiment was the shy idealist Robert Gould Shaw, the son and grandson of abolitionists; he had left Harvard to enlist, at twenty-one, and had been wounded in the battle at Antietam Creek. The nobility of the men of the 54th has been celebrated in bronze (in Augustus Saint-Gaudens' elegiac bas-relief sculpture on Boston Common) and in poetry (most notably, perhaps, in Robert Lowell's harrowed "For the Union Dead").

"Glory," directed by Edward Zwick, from a screenplay by Kevin Jarre that's based partly on Shaw's letters, is affecting from start to finish, emotionally moving even when the scenes falter. Visually, it's formal yet lyrical and fluid. The cinematographer, Freddie Francis, doesn't try for a shocking immediacy. He uses colors delicately to suggest the vernal freshness of the land that the soldiers pass through, and he distances us slightly in the combat scenes. They're like something purified by memory. They're being poeticized, elegized as we see them, but this doesn't strike a false note. Rather, it seems a way to honor the pastness of the past. "Glory" is not as assured in dealing with the infighting that Colonel Shaw has to put himself through when he recognizes that the high command has no intention of arming the 54th—that the generals mean to use the men only in the rear area, for manual labor. The Colonel has to outmaneuver the Army to get his troops into combat.

As the small, sad-faced Shaw, who saw Hell at Antietam and is determined to prepare his men for what's ahead, Matthew Broderick shows us the misery of a softhearted commanding officer. His Shaw is not a natural hero: he has to work at it. Even Broderick's drawbacks (the flat tone of his voice, his relative inexpressiveness) seem to help here. Shaw is decent, uncertain of himself—a worrier. It's a lovely performance, as remote and touching as a daguerreotype. Broderick keeps a sense of proportion; his presence never dominates the black actors.

Denzel Washington, Morgan Freeman, and Andre Braugher, a low-voiced young dynamo from the stage, are performers of such skill that they're vivid, and almost persuasive, in hand-me-down roles. Except for Colonel Shaw, the principal characters are fictional, and you know it instantly, because they're the usual representative group of recruits who bicker and quarrel before they shape up and become fine soldiers. As Trip, a runaway slave with flogging scars on his back, Denzel Washington is the high-tension Bogart-Brando figure—sullen, cynical, smart. As a former gravedigger, a calm older man who steadies everyone's nerves, Morgan Freeman is a towering version of the Spencer Tracy figure. Andre Braugher is a smiling, educated black in specs, a childhood companion of the Colonel's—they were raised together. Now he has to learn to live without the urban amenities; he has to develop his body to match his mind. (Franchot Tone used to play this part.) The conceptions are based



"Wendell and I dropped our tango lessons. They were starting to take us over."

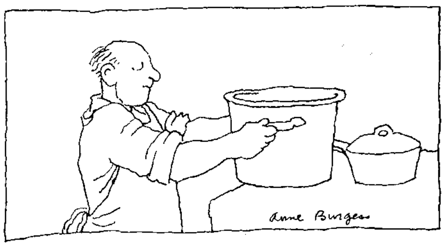
on white icons, but the actors perform these roles as if they'd never been played before.

We get to know the three characters in the tent that they share with a backcountry man (the quietly impressive Jihmi Kennedy), who has a slight stutter and a pure, radiant faith in God, and with a mute drummer boy. Denzel Washington's ornery, troublemaking Trip jeers at Braugher's ill-at-ease intellectual for being "a nigger who talks like a white man"; Trip calls him Snowflake. The putdown recalls the taunts in black exploitation pictures, and Trip's snarling manner recalls a whole raft of angry young men strutting their stuff. His style of defiance is modern; so is Washington's acting style. When he's about to be whipped, he pulls open his shirt and flips his hands in the air in a gesture that spells out "Method Actor." He has a modern charge of ferocity; you're aware that it's anachronistic, yet it lifts you up. The three black powerhouse actors get to play something besides dignity. Their collisions may be based on scenes worn to the bone, but they have new undercurrents, a new friction, and, of course, a new face. Braugher, the bookish soldier, with his volume of essays by the Transcendentalists, can no longer talk to his old friend Shaw or the other white officers he used to be on equal terms with—that would be "fraternizing"—and he's a freak to his fellow-enlistees. His attempts to defend himself when Trip humiliates him are gallant and discombobulated; he seems on the verge of a nervous breakdown. The way Braugher plays the role, we don't dissociate ourselves from his physical weakness. We respect his coming apart.

It takes Morgan Freeman to moderate Trip's rage. We first meet his character at Antietam: there's a lyrical moment when the wounded Shaw, lying on the ground, feels a boot testing whether he's dead, and looks up at the tall gravedigger, his head backlighted by the blazing sun, who asks, "You all right there, Captain?" Now, when Trip, who has picked a fight with Union soldiers from another regiment, expresses his hatred of the whites, the tall man speaks to him. As he sees it, whites have been fighting for *them*—for *their* freedom. And whites have been giving their lives; he knows, because he was digging their graves. With all the moral authority this superb actor can muster, he raises questions in Trip's head. Freeman's character is saying that not all whites are their enemies, that some whites (such as Colonel Shaw) are even willing to die fighting for the end of slavery. Trip's cynicism about white men has an inflammatory, rabble-rousing appeal for movie audiences. But when the gravedigger speaks for the facts, for sanity and justice, he carries the day. (Of course, the Civil War, which freed four million slaves, was not initially a war to abolish slavery; it turned into that through the actions of Lincoln and, some say, of the slaves themselves—they fled to Union Army posts. But the gravedigger isn't wrong.)

In the worst of the film's didactic set pieces, Trip refuses the honor of carrying the regimental colors into battle. He tells Colonel Shaw that he doesn't want to carry Shaw's flag, that even if the war ends slavery it won't end racial oppression. But when the flag-bearer falls during the climactic charge, at Fort Wagner, on July 18, 1863, Trip picks up the colors. "Glory" gives Trip present-day disaffected attitudes. Then it says that he became disaffected because his parents were sold off—he was orphaned and mistreated. Now that he's found a home in the regiment, he's straightened out. Disillusionment is used to give the antihero glamour and hipness, but then the movie wants him to be a foursquare hero with heart. It's a painfully used-up plot idea, and it makes "Glory" seem a bit of a cheat. Denzel Washington brings passionate conviction to his man-to-man talk about the flag with Colonel Shaw, but he can't rescue the scene; you half expect the prescient Trip to proclaim himself a man of the Third World.

The big Hollywood directors of the thirties and forties would have given dramatic flourishes like Trip's becoming the flag-bearer (and the film's final one, by which Trip and the Colonel are joined forever) a simplistic patriotic flash. Those directors would have yanked at our emotions. Zwick doesn't—and he's right not to—but he doesn't throw out the flourishes, either. He includes them halfheartedly. (He also includes a touch that's way off key: Colonel Shaw, on horseback, slashes a series of watermelons. Presumably, he's destroying stereotypes of blacks.)



The script is just a conventional melodrama. Zwick has made something more thoughtful than that. He uses James Horner's (sometimes intrusive) orchestral score and the Boys Choir of Harlem to compensate for the moviegoer's tendency to see battle scenes simply as exciting spectacle. And this musical equivalent to the righteousness of the men's cause can work on you even if you try to fight it. But Zwick can't always transcend the limitations of what's written: when the men sing around the campfire on the night before the battle at Fort Wagner, there's an emotionally perfect image of Morgan Freeman's huge, elongated hands clapping in syncopation, but there's also a flabby moment when Trip blurts out, "Y'all's the onliest family I got—and I love the 54th." A scene at an élite Boston party, and Colonel Shaw's meetings with his venal superior officers and other whites, could be out of any starchy historical picture, and, despite the effort to achieve authenticity, the dialogue is frequently tone-deaf for the period. (The Irish drill sergeant is a clean century off, and his use of female comparisons to insult the black soldiers seems witlessly gross.)

Some of the incidents aren't rounded. The movie shows what happens when the soldiers of the 54th are issued their pay vouchers and discover that they're to be paid ten dollars a month instead of the thirteen dollars that soldiers in other units receive. The angry Trip moves among the men, urging them not to accept, and they rip up their vouchers; pieces of vouchers flutter in the air, and, in a gesture of solidarity, the Colonel tears his in two. But the movie fails to tell us what happens next. Did the men get their equal pay, and how long did it take? (The historical fact is that many of the men died in battle before the thirteen-dollar payment came through.)

The Colonel volunteers his regiment for the foredoomed task of leading the assault on Fort Wagner, the Confederate stronghold that guards the entrance to Charleston Harbor. He and six hundred of his men advance over the sand dunes toward the fort. We're meant to feel that the soldiers' disciplined attack, with fire coming directly down at them—their willingness to be annihilated—establishes their right to be free men. (In the actual battle, forty-two per cent were killed.) Zwick may not want to put any stress on the Catch-22 irony that the black soldiers could prove themselves only by sacrificing themselves, or on the irony that the Colonel's leading his troops to their death seems meant to represent the white man's redemption. We in the audience, with our inescapably modern attitudes, can't help wondering if Shaw, in volunteering his regiment for the honor of being massacred, wasn't doing just what his racist superior officers hoped for. But our suspiciousness is beside the point. The movie "Born on the Fourth of July" finds its meaning in seeing through the nation's call for sacrifice; "Glory" shows the high cost of war, and yet finds meaning in the sacrifice.

In the early scenes at Antietam, when body parts erupt and hover in the air, the randomness of the carnage seems appropriate. By the end, if the movie is to live up to the feelings it stirs in us, we need to see the bravery of the troops as they steadily move toward the concentrated firepower of Fort Wagner, the dead piling up on the slopes of the bastion and on its walls. This defeat (they couldn't take the fort) is meant to be experienced as a triumph. But the staging has a leapfrogging clumsiness. Zwick doesn't have the instinct for images that would burst the written framework. Like the inexperienced Colonel Shaw, he can take only measured steps. The movie is terribly literal-minded, with evenhanded pacing, and this fastidiousness mutes it emotionally. Still, Zwick's failure to inspire the awe that you feel in front of the Saint-Gaudens memorial or when you read Lowell's words about "man's lovely, peculiar power to choose life and die" doesn't make the movie a failure. "Glory" isn't a great film, but it's a good film on a great subject.

MIKE FIGGIS's "Internal Affairs" is art-house sleaze. This label isn't meant to be totally pejorative: the picture has a creepy, rhythmic quality that sucks you in and keeps you amused. It's a sophisticated variant of other L.A. cops-and-coke-and-art-world thrillers, such as William Friedkin's "To Live and Die in L.A." and Hal Ashby's "8 Million Ways to Die." They were gaudy pulp, but this new one is swank pulp—smoother, better controlled, with expensive-looking couture and an ingeniously nasty subtext. The central character is a prosperous veteran cop, played by Richard Gere, who is everybody's friend. He's being investigated by two officers from the Police Department's internal-affairs division—a righteous, ramrod-straight Latino, played by Andy Garcia, and his sane, honest partner, Laurie Metcalf. As the team begins to close in on what makes the Gere character so popular, he contrives to meet the Latino's beautiful blond wife (Nancy Travis). More than that, he starts talking to the husband about the beautiful blond wife. And you realize you're seeing a dirty, sexy twist on the Iago-Othello relationship.

This Iago (Gere) has an advanced case of festering machismo. A womanizer who secretly makes out with his buddies' ravishing wives and is on good terms with his own wife (Annabella Sciorra) and his ex-wives, he's all sweetness and caresses with women. He feels no sexual tensions with them; he uses them like cuddly pets. He loves children, too; he's got eight, and another on the way. His tensions are in cuckolding men, or in just making them visualize him in flagrante delicto with their wives. He goads men to doubt their adequacy. This sniggering, vengeful interplay with husbands gives him more satisfaction than seducing their women. He torments the stiff-backed Othello (Garcia), boasting of his conquest, and Othello, in a jealous rage, tears off to confront his wife. When he finds her surrounded by her friends from the New Contemporary Museum, where she works, he grabs her and explodes in Spanish, whacking her. Eventually, the plot centers on a variant of Desdemona's handkerchief: a pair of panties. (They're white and so demure you feel *almost* certain the woman is innocent.)

Richard Gere looks better with a few years on him. His thick hair in a brush cut that's either graying or frosted, he slithers through the picture very dexterously, the smiling manipulator. You can see why women are drawn to him,

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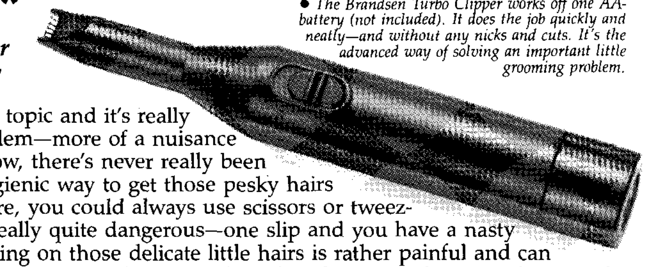

and why men are taken in. He's heartlessly affable. Andy Garcia, though, gives a one-note, glaring-eyed performance. Maybe it's the humorlessness of his role that defeats him: except for his key, violent explosions (which are terrific), he's so rigid he's barely human. Laurie Metcalf makes more of an impression than the glamorous babes do. As a topnotch police officer, a lesbian who doesn't try to ingratiate herself with anybody, she shows a dry wit; it's a strong, contained performance, tough in just the right way.

Figgis, the English jazz musician and experimental-theatre man, who wrote, directed, and scored the 1988 "Stormy Monday," worked this time from a very smart script (the first to be produced) by the American journalist and novelist Henry Bean. The movie is rather dreamy about the details of police corruption, and the construction goes wrong toward the end. (Bean and Figgis couldn't seem to think of a reason for Gere to go where they want him to be.) But this picture doesn't depend on solid construction or plot logistics. It depends on a sicko undertone and musical rhythms. Surprisingly, the score (Figgis shares the credit) is ponderous; it's generic psychopathology music—at one point, it's nothing more than a chic desiccated sound that the woman next to me suggested might be locusts. The movie represents commercialism that has gone so far into intensity for intensity's sake that it becomes a minority taste. You can't recommend "Internal Affairs" with a straight face—it casts a slimy-naughty spell. It's bad fun.

—PAULINE KAEL

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MOST UNAPPETIZING METAPHOR OF THE WEEK

[*From the Duluth* (*Minn.*) *News-Tribune*]

Lawful gambling in the state "is like a cancerous pizza," Bouza said. "It has developed and grown and enveloped the entire community, and we are the midgets who are trying to eat through the crust and the tomato sauce and bring some order to the process."

•

Everyone stood when the President arrived, of course, followed by his personal bodyguard, a lithe, thirtyish woman whose dark tresses neatly concealed the fact that she was one of the best pistol shots in government service.—*"Clear and Present Danger," by Tom Clancy.*

Her gold medals tucked inside her pageboy.

MUSICAL EVENTS

Orchestral Adventures

IN Carnegie Hall last month, three concerts on consecutive days presented the big symphony orchestra as a medium still inspiring both to established masters and to young composers of the late twentieth century.

Elliott Carter's "Three Occasions for Orchestra" had its New York première at the second of two concerts given by the St. Louis Symphony, conducted by Leonard Slatkin. It is a suite of three occasional pieces—lasting about three, six, and seven minutes—which spans a big range of orchestral and musical adventure. Only the last movement was altogether new. The opening piece is "A Celebration of Some 100 × 150 Notes," which was first heard in 1987 and is the most substantial of the twenty-one fanfares commissioned by the Houston Symphony to celebrate the hundred-and-fiftieth anniversary of the State of Texas. (The Philharmonic has also played it.) The second movement, "Remembrance," was commissioned by Harvard in memory of Paul Fromm, and was first heard at Tanglewood, in 1988. Oliver Knussen conducted the British première of "Celebration"; at Tanglewood and then elsewhere, he conducted "Remembrance"; and at Knussen's urging Carter composed the new piece, "Anniversary," to make up a suite. It was commissioned by the BBC, and Knussen conducted the first performance of "Three Occasions," with the BBC Symphony, last October.

"Anniversary" is dedicated to Helen Carter, the composer's wife, on the fiftieth anniversary of their marriage. The score is prefaced by lines from Donne's "The Anniversarie":

Only our love hath no
  decay;
This, no to morrow hath,
  nor yesterday,
Running it never runs
  from us away,
But truly keepes his first,
  last, everlasting day.

The composer describes "Anniversary" as "a work of constantly developing contrapuntal lines passed from one instrument to another." One can hear the counterpoints, but the main impression is of long melodic lines, often carried by the strings, with punctuation or accompaniment from faster-moving gaggles of woodwinds and sober, long-breathed countersubjects from the brasses. In "Celebration" Carter returned with zest to the sounds of the full orchestra after years spent writing chamber and vocal music in which he had pushed forward his lyrical explorations; in "Remembrance," the solo trombone, which delivers the noble *oraison funèbre*, seems as much a "singer" as the singers of "Syringa" and "In Sleep, in Thunder." The sense of a company of characters, each individualized, each with his or her characteristic lines, is strong, again, in "Anniversary." Although the violins sometimes unite as a chorus, often they are written for as pairs, or even as individuals. The touches of color, the doublings, the passings of a note or a figure from instrument to instrument are delicately and exuberantly worked. The tuba is a character in his own right, and some of the best lines—including the laconic curtain line that, as in many of Carter's recent works, brings the piece to a happy close—are allotted to him. The first flute and the first bassoon also become recognizable personalities. Young, unjaded orchestral players have told me that they delight in playing Carter's orchestral scores, because of the sudden challenging, rewarding responsibilities that come their way.

If one stands back from "Celebration," "Remembrance," and "Anniversary"—from "Occasions" as a whole—neglecting the details, one then seems to see the music as a landscape with a listener's path in time leading over hills, through valleys, over brooks into adventures as unexpected as those Alice encountered when she crossed the brooks of Looking-Glass Land ("It's something very like learning geography"), onto peaks, back to the plain. There are places to pause and catch one's breath, places where the progress is headlong. The works are adventures through an enchanted stretch of sounds and structures. Everything that Carter has published and has given to performers to play can, I believe, open new, visionary worlds to listeners prepared to listen. And the works of recent years, in their full, eager mastery, are some of the freshest and most exhilarating of all. The St. Louis performance was not ideal—Mr. Slatkin had not quite brought the numbers up to performance speed—but it was spirited.

THE earlier St. Louis concert included the New York première of György Ligeti's Piano Concerto;

Anthony di Bonaventura was the soloist. Ligeti, since leaving Hungary, in 1956, has composed music in many manners and become a new force in contemporary music. As a generalization, one might say that he has eagerly seized on any new technical methods of construction which excited him, has carried them to extremes, has tempered them with his own dreamlike visions of space, time, and sounds melting together, and has—by a process combining a fascination with methods, a free, instinctual modification of their "rules," and, as arbiter, a finely tuned, romantic ear—created some of the most striking scores of our age: "Atmosphères" (1961), "Aventures et Nouvelles Aventures" (1962-65), "Lux Aeterna" (1966), the Chamber Concerto (1970), the opera "Le Grand Macabre" (1974-77), the Horn Trio (1982). (In passing, let me commend a recent Bridge record of the Horn Trio, played with uncommon artistry and eloquence by William Purvis, Rolf Schulte, and Alan Feinberg.) Sometimes he pushed things to extremes "regardless," as in the "Poème Symphonique" (1962). At the start of Ravel's "L'Heure Espagnole," three metronomes tick away in different tempi; Ligeti's "Poème Symphonique" is scored for a hundred metronomes, ticking away in different tempi. When the last one has run down, the piece is over; the duration is listed as between twenty and a hundred minutes.

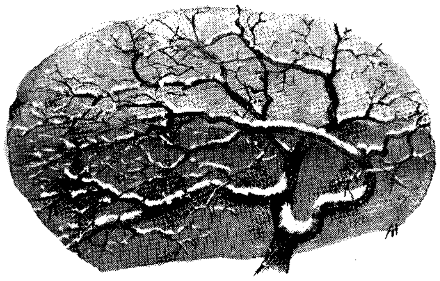
The Piano Concerto appeared as a three-movement work in 1986 and reappeared in 1988 with two movements added. The composer's preoccupations while he worked on it, and on the Études pour Piano (1985) that were to some extent studies for the concerto (they won the 1986 Grawemeyer Award), were spelled out in an interview published in a 1988 number of *Das Orchester:*

> In recent years I have been much occupied with African music . . . the very complex African polyrhythms and polyphony. . . . My favorite poet is Franz Kafka. . . . Among graphic artists, Escher is closest to me. . . . Experimental mathematics and fractal geometry interest and fascinate me. . . . In 1984, I first saw the computer-produced illustrations of the so-called Mandelbrot and Julia sets, wonderful fractal pictures [which since then, Ligeti has said elsewhere, "have played an important role in my musical compositions"]. . . . I very much admire Bridget Riley. . . . I harbor a strong sympathy for Steve Reich and Terry Riley. . . . My favorite composer today is Nancarrow.

On being asked about his attitude toward the United States, Ligeti answers, "I am pro-American, and above all pro-Thatcher." On being asked whether he thinks computers might help to solve some composing problems (specifically, that of achieving freedom from our "outworn" twelve-note tuning system), he answers:

> I think so. But I don't let the computer take over my composing. Only: encounters with the World of Information stir musical thoughts in me, structures, which I don't let the computer calculate for me. I stick to the Maurits Escher idea of intuition or "construction by hand." Yet Computer Science and Artificial Intelligence do strongly attract me. In them—not in the tonal/atonal dilemma—I see a key to future musical development.

At the Carnegie concert, the concerto, which lasts about twenty-two minutes, was played only once. I wish it had been played twice, as at its London première it was, for I wanted to admire and enjoy it but at first hearing found it somewhat unattractive and schematic. A second hearing might have clarified things. There were moments to enjoy, profoundly, in the sounds of the second movement (when they could be heard above a barrage of coughing); a Bartókian night piece, it includes the coo of an alto ocarina and the wail of a Swanee whistle. (Again a link with Ravel, who used the latter instrument in "L'Enfant et les Sortilèges.") The Messiaenic gestures in the fourth movement were arresting. Before the performance, Mr. Slatkin gave a little introductory talk and got his artists to play, strand by separate strand, a few measures from the finale. The individual strands made musical sense, in a rather banal way, but when they were all played at once the passage produced a sound that was confused and impenetrable. The Études—which are even more evidently influenced by Nancarrow, Reich, and African polyrhythms—are equally schematic, but their smaller scale makes them apprehensible, and in the fifth and sixth of them, "Rainbow" and "Warsaw Autumn," romance transfigures the otherwise desiccant rules that the composer has chosen to play by. It would be easy to suggest that since the Horn Trio (which is subtitled "Homage to Brahms") *ignes fatui* may have seduced Ligeti, may have led him astray for a while. But because his earlier works have lasted so well over the years, in performance after performance, I prefer to think that I somehow missed the point of the concerto. I must hear it again. Not having seen a score, I can hardly comment on the performance. Carter—like Rorem, Adams, Druckman, Reich, Torke—is published by Boosey & Hawkes, a firm that readily provides music critics with scores and tapes so that they can become familiar with works before having to write about them. G. Schirmer, which publishes Harbison, Glass, Corigliano, is similarly helpful. Schott, Ligeti's German publisher, has no such prominent New York presence.



THE day after the second St. Louis concert, the National Orchestral Association presented an exciting, heartening program: five new big-orchestra pieces—four of them by fairly young American composers—all of which proved worth hearing and at least three of which, I thought, deserve to be taken up by other orchestras. The Association was founded sixty years ago, at a time when few American music schools had their own orchestras; over the years, as schools proliferated and fostered their own orchestras, it adjusted its aims. Last season, it launched its New Music Orchestral Project: the creation of an orchestra, based on Manhattan School students and graduates, "to study, rehearse, tape, and perform unheard orchestral music by living American composers." Scores are submitted from all over the country; the jury that chose the pick of this season's crop consisted of Leslie Bassett, Marc-Antonio Consoli, Aaron Jay Kernis, Tania León, Otto Luening, Lou Rodgers, Anthony Strilko, and Steven Stucky. The pieces heard in Carnegie, works of merit, were diverse in style and untainted by modishness—neither minimalist nor soggily neo-romantic. Each of the composers had a distinctive voice and something to say, and all of them wrote well for orchestra.

"Strange Attractors," by Anne LeBaron (who was born in Baton Rouge in 1953, and studied for a while with Ligeti), was commissioned by the Oklahoma Symphony for a fiftieth anniversary that the orchestra did not survive to celebrate. The title, her program note explains, "derives from theoretical physics and refers to mathematical feedback loops," which can produce "both stable and chaotic patterns" and "have been described as systems of curves and clouds of points, variously evoking galaxies, fireworks, and weird, disturbing blossomings." The phrases are apt, too, to describe her twelve-minute, colorful piece, which is packed with bright incident but is cleanly and surely shaped. The Concerto (in the Form of Variations) for Viola and Orchestra of Joel Phillip Friedman (who was born in Philadelphia in 1960) is a poetic, beautiful, and intelligent exploration of a long, eloquent melody, through variations that are at first musing and gentle, then passionate, finally simple, confident, and serene. The work is a dramatic scena for the soloist; the orchestra provides at once a setting and a cast of conversants and commentators. Paul Neubauer was a fine soloist. The concerto lasts about twenty minutes. Fantasia, by Jeffery Cotton (who was born in Los Angeles in 1957, and studied for a while with Henze), is the first movement of his symphony "Poems of Night." It is a quirky, understated, imaginative fourteen-minute stretch of night music—an elusive drift of fleeting, sometimes lapped ideas. At one point, the harp, scarce audible, plays eight bars of "Chopin" from Schumann's "Carnaval." If the succeeding movements of "Poems of Night"—they are Scherzo Diabolico and Rapsodia—are as arresting as this, the symphony should be billed without delay.

Those were the three works I found most impressive. "The Rauschenberg Variations," by Frederick Bianchi (who was born in Cleveland in 1954), is a study in textures: long, long pedals—mostly on F, sometimes on E-flat—change color and register as they sustain, for about ten minutes, a flow of subsidiary parts now slow, now furiously busy. Jonathan Kramer's program note told us that the composer has insured an element of unpredictability by writing some passages so difficult of execution that their precise rendering is well-nigh impossible: "As long as the performers are honest and try their hardest, any performance—whether by an amateur group or by the world's most virtuosic orchestra—is *correct.*" The note said, too, that the players had to offer up any soloistic inclinations and even chamber-music interests to the general sonority, and that "when performers achieve this selflessness, listeners hear a piece of stunning originality and startling beauty." I was not exactly stunned or startled, merely somewhat beguiled and interested, but I respect Mr. Kramer's judgments, and he knows the work better than I do. My response to Lawrence Widdoes' "The Visitors," which ended the concert, was also more temperate than his; perhaps, after soaking up so much new music already, I was flagging. Mr. Kramer wrote of "a virtually complete collection of twentieth-century orchestral timbres" and of a composer "as inventive in the orchestral domain as he is in the rhythmic and harmonic realms." The "visitors" of the title are presumably the solo instruments who drop in—one, two, or three at a time—to take the limelight in this seventeen-minute score. Widdoes (who was born in Wilmington, Delaware, in 1932, and who studied and now teaches at Juilliard) came closest to representing the establishment in this bill. He is a good composer: everything of his that I have heard has been sound, and some pieces have been striking.

The young orchestra played the challenging program with diligence, accomplishment, and devotion. Jorge Mester's conducting was sure. There was no hint of the routine with which our regular or pickup symphony orchestras sometimes polish off contemporary scores: these were engaged and engaging performances. The next concert of the New Music Orchestral Project, another program of music by young American composers, is due on March 2nd, at the Manhattan School.

—Andrew Porter

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"As you know," Mr. Dinkins said, standing in front of his new appointees, "we have cast a very wide net in the seven weeks since the election in an effort to bring to government an array of talent and experience that reflects the great diversity of our city." The six named yesterday included two black people, a Hispanic person and three women.—*The Times.*

Any men?

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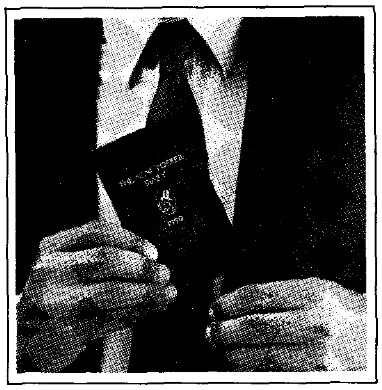

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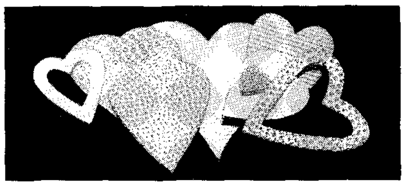

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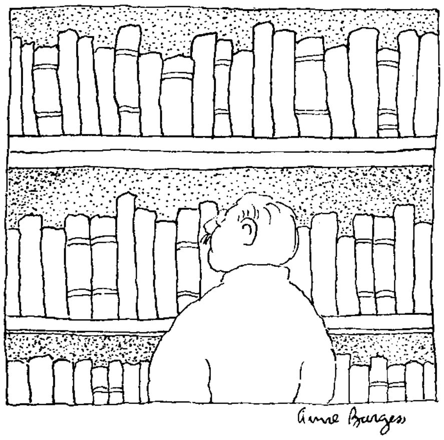
BOOKS

In Borges' Wake

THE reputation of the Argentine writer Adolfo Bioy Casares is still associated, in the United States, with that of his friend and sometime collaborator Jorge Luis Borges. They wrote spoofs and parodies together, and worked on film scripts, anthologies, and translations; it might be said that Bioy Casares, though a generation younger, called the older man out of his shell, and inspired Borges' first and most mind-blowing book of prose, the collection "Ficciones." Bioy Casares is known, on his own, as the author of the betranced science-fiction novella "The Invention of Morel" and of a number of novels few non-Latin Americans have read. His latest novel to be published here, "The Adventures of a Photographer in La Plata" (translated from the Spanish by Suzanne Jill Levine; Dutton; $18.95), is a slight and sly tale not apt to widen his local audience greatly, yet it has a charm and a sinister wit and a sudden sadness that only an assured literary performer could deliver. It tells, in a terse and flat but not unfriendly style, of a young small-town photographer, Nicolasito Almanza, who arrives with his equipment in the city of La Plata, the capital of Buenos Aires province. No sooner has Almanza emerged into the city from his all-night bus ride than he is hailed by a stranger—a tall, rosy-faced "older gentleman" who is leading an entourage consisting of two attractive young women, an infant in arms, and a little girl. These, it develops, are the Lombardos, also newly arrived in the capital, from the district of Magdalena. Before the novel is over, our hero will give blood to save the father, Don Juan, from dying, and will sleep with both of Don Juan's daughters—Griselda, the mother of the children, and Julia, who assists Almanza with his photography. The photographer is amply warned to disentangle himself from this family, who have evidently fled their native soil in some financial embarrassment, and whose patriarch is rumored to be none other than Satan, but a certain modernist glue prolongs entanglements, delays deliveries, and complicates arrangements in this plot, and Almanza extracts himself only when he moves on to photograph the sights of another city. In fact no harm befalls him, except the loss of Julia, with whom he has, without the reader's much noticing it, fallen in love.

The pleasure and the discomfort the book affords derive from what we might call the comedy of daily intercourse—the great amounts of time (the characters') and words (the author's) expended in going back and forth among boarding houses and restaurants, explaining and fulfilling or missing appointments, chasing disappearing suitcases and delayed remittances, observing obscurely motivated conversational courtesies. Hastening from place to place, "Almanza remembered a dream situation: being in a hurry and walking slowly with tired legs that weigh him down. The truth was that everything that day was taking too much time." The grid of numbered streets whereon the characters pursue one another is indicated with a mathematical precision; upon the grid, however, human conduct oscillates unpredictably. Almanza and Griselda rent a hotel room for two hours for a tryst, but the electricity between them shorts out:

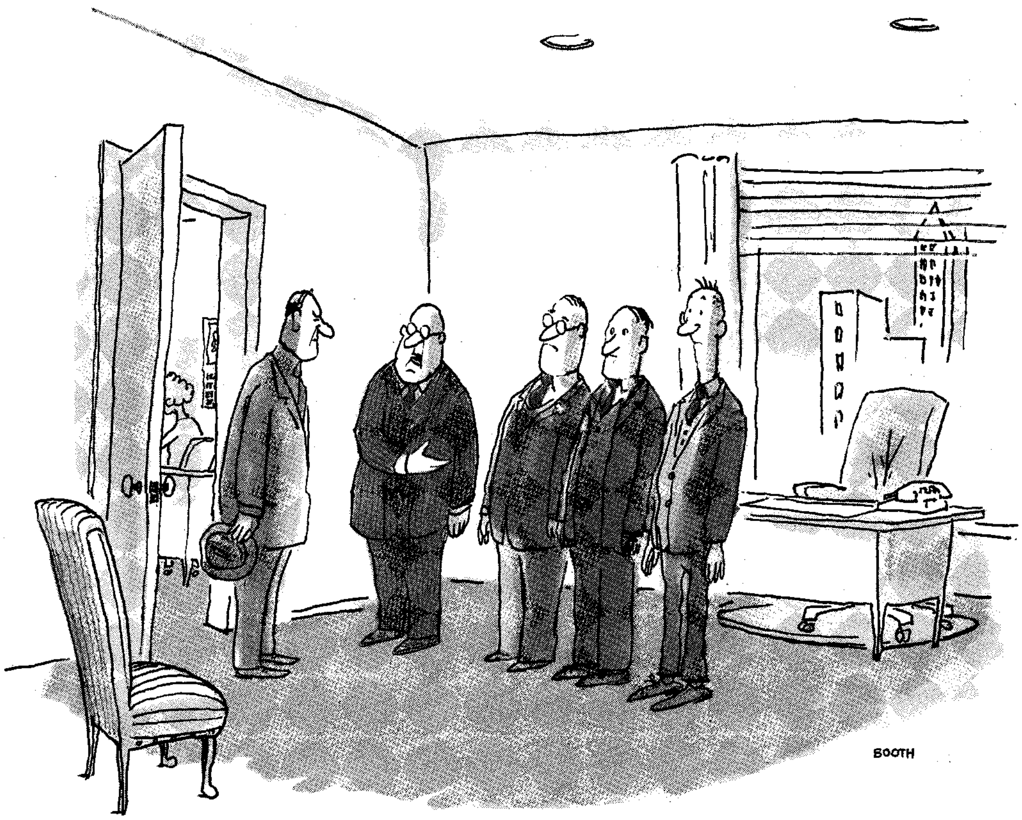
> Again she held him close. How strange, he thought, so slender and so strong. She looked beautiful but attracted him less than before, and at moments she irritated him a little. Perhaps because she had lied to him (not meaning any wrong, one must admit) and also, incredible as it seemed, because she had confessed her lie. He had discovered that he didn't feel at ease with nervous, complicated people. While he was thinking this, a hard arm held him by the neck. He felt some pain and couldn't move; meanwhile Griselda was rubbing against him. Suddenly, with noticeable force, she pushed him away. Almanza wanted to wipe his forehead with his handkerchief. He was still looking for it in his pant pockets and jacket, when he saw her fall as if she had fainted with her head hanging off the edge of the bed, looking up wildly, her mouth half-open and her breast bare. One is always being manipulated, he thought and got angry again. He reconsidered: It's not that bad.



The encounter ends oddly; Almanza obeys "an impulse that was familiar to him" and takes out his camera and photographs Griselda, no fewer than twenty times. "She looked up coyly and shook her hair. He photographed her again." The one thing that proceeds smoothly for him in La Plata is his photography of the city's buildings and monuments; his lens cuts through the maze, as art saves us from life.

Bioy Casares is a deadpan parodist, and what is parodied here seems to be the traditional novel itself—its solemn tracing of the psychological, erotic, perilous relational currents among "nervous, complicated people." No wonder that Almanza, caught in the web of the Lombardos' seductions and beset by gossip from all sides, takes an interest, while in Griselda's bedroom, in a magazine article that tells "how the great powers and even your country were only a smoke screen and how everything that happens on God's earth—even what happens to you and me—depends on the decisions of a handful of men in dark suits sitting around a table." In our hunger for a pattern behind things, we entertain fantasies of conspiracy. At several points in the book, Almanza senses an echoing: "Everything happens to me in pairs." When he and Julia part, she gives him a kaleidoscope, a toy that fetches symmetry out of accidental arrangements.

The novel's mood, laconic style, and mechanisms—the careful notation of happenstance, the plurality of ominous characters—are those of a mystery novel, but one whose minor mysteries (What do the Lombardos want? Is Don Juan the Devil or a garrulous old con man with two daughters at loose ends?) and major mystery (What do the photographer's seemingly aimless adventures add up to?) are left unresolved. The novel, somewhat in the manner of Robbe-Grillet (who was influenced by Bioy Casares), arrests our attention and wins our respect by the things it disdains to do: it does not overdramatize or moralize, it denies events and objects a deeper meaning. A clean if desolate flatness results—the spookiness of the minimal, haunted by the absence of ghosts. Whodunit? Nobodaddy. In using the mystery-novel format to tease forth metaphysical sensations, "The Adventures of a Photographer in La Plata" resembles, among many other modernist works, Robbe-Grillet's "Les Gommes," Raymond Queneau's "We Always Treat Women Too Well," Borges' story "The Garden of Forking Paths," and that surprising best-seller Umberto Eco's "The Name of the Rose."



"This is my son Sam, the doctor; my son Winston, the lawyer; and my son Alden, the lawnblower."

• •

BORGES inspired a character, the blind Jorge of Burgos, in "The Name of the Rose," and also the book's central image of a labyrinthine library, an essentially infinite library, as a universal metaphor. Another Borgesian notion, that of a Cabalistic conspiracy running beneath things, putting men in touch with diabolical deities and staining and twisting history, informs Eco's second novel, "Foucault's Pendulum" (translated from the Italian by William Weaver; Harcourt Brace Jovanovich; $22.95), which, like his first, is bulky, recondite, intricate, and best-selling. Borges, in his short stories and in his highly individual literary criticism, could give us a shiver with the lightest, most offhand touch of his private supernatural. His stories often open with a creak of esoteric pedantry:

> I owe the discovery of Uqbar to the conjunction of a mirror and an encyclopedia. —*"Tlön, Uqbar, Orbis Tertius."*

> No one saw him disembark in the unanimous night, no one saw the bamboo canoe sink into the sacred mud, but in a few days there was no one who did not know that the taciturn man came from the South and that his home had been one of those numberless villages upstream in the deeply cleft side of the mountain, where the Zend language has not been contaminated by Greek and where leprosy is infrequent. —*"The Circular Ruins."*

> In Asia Minor or in Alexandria, in the second century of our faith (when Basilides was announcing that the cosmos was a rash and malevolent improvisation engineered by defective angels), Nils Runeberg might have directed, with a singular intellectual passion, one of the Gnostic conventicles. —*"Three Versions of Judas."*

And, in fullest throat:

> Those who write that the sect of the Phoenix originated in Heliopolis, and make it derive from the religious restoration which followed the death of the reformer Amenhotep IV, cite texts by Herodotus, Tacitus, and inscriptions from the Egyptian monuments; but they ignore, or try to ignore, the fact that the denomination of the sect by the name of Phoenix is not prior to Rabanus Maurus, and that the most ancient sources (the *Saturnalia*, or Flavius Josephus, let us say) speak only of the People of Custom or the People of the Secret. —*"The Sect of the Phoenix."*

In attempting to expand one of these Borgesian *frissons*, with their union of curious fact and macabre fancy, their solemn conspiratorial tone, their expert trafficking along that shadowy borderline where knowledge becomes arcane and thought becomes madness, into a six-hundred-and-forty-page, hundred-and-twenty-chapter saga of research and rumor in modern Italy, Paris, and Brazil, Eco has not reckoned with the possibility that *frissons* are not infinitely expandable. Borges was always brief; he wrote with a poet's ear; his own blindness and reclusive habits gave his mental explorations a peculiar and inimitable resonance, an earnest sorrow and uncanny repose. He had the voice of a sphinx. Eco, contrariwise, appears to be a postmodern intellectual as animated as he is intelligent, a mental extrovert whose cerebrations spill over into a number of disciplines beyond his two special fields, semiotics and the Middle Ages, and who can write engagingly (as was demonstrated in his 1986 collection "Travels in Hyperreality") about most matters and who gives (as we have seen in a number of publications in recent months) excellent interviews. "Foucault's Pendulum" is a monumental performance, erudite beyond measure and, insofar as Eco's brainy presence on the page is enjoyable, enjoyable. But as a tale of human adventure, erected upon the not quite interchangeable characters of three Milanese editors who prankishly cook up a secret sect called Tres (Templi Resurgentes Equites Synarchici) and

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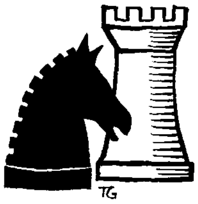
are consumed by their creation, it totters and sags, and seems spun-out and thin.

The medieval characters of "The Name of the Rose" had at the least the solidity and color of their richly evoked fourteenth-century milieu. Those of "Foucault's Pendulum" belong to our era, and they seem, rather than creations of the author's erudition, victims of it. They are disposable plastic holders that pour out ribbons of information, of facts and quotations all tied around the central notion that the Templars—a monastic order of Christian knights founded in 1118 to protect pilgrims to the shakily held Holy Land, and destroyed in 1314 by Philip IV of France, who wanted their money—in truth survived and, by means of a relay system of hidden initiates who are supposed to meet six times, in six different countries, at intervals of a hundred and twenty years, are invisibly progressing toward a secret concerning the earth's "telluric currents" that will enable its holders to rule the world. Why they didn't simply start ruling in 1314 may have escaped me—there is some tricky business about a map, and a beam of sunlight at a certain moment of the year on Foucault's pendulum, a non-imaginary object that hangs in the Conservatoire des Arts et Métiers, in Paris. This great plot involves everyone from the Rosicrucians to the Jesuits, Francis Bacon to Cagliostro, the Freemasons (of course) to the Jews (perhaps), and was the real reason, it would seem, that Napoleon invaded Russia and Hitler perpetrated the Holocaust. If this last joke seems in dubious taste, a better joke is that the three editors reason from a cryptic document, entrusted to them by a prospective author who then vanishes, which is finally demonstrated to have been simply a merchant's delivery list. Better yet is the underlying jest that our human lust for conspiracy theories and secret organizations is so keen that a donnish parody of a cult becomes a murderously real one. There can't be too many hermetic stones left unturned in this ransacking of texts, this orgy of citation and paraphrase for which Eco, he told his interviewer in the *Times Magazine*, "pillaged all the bookshops in at least 10 cities in Italy, France and America," acquiring "1,500 books on occultism plus 400 or so rare books." He could be describing his own researches when he has his narrator write:

> I found myself in a morass of books, in which it was difficult to distinguish historical fact from hermetic gossip, and reliable information from flights of fancy. Working like a machine for a week, I drew up a bewildering list of sects, lodges, conventicles.

The enterprising Italians have already published a dictionary of Eco's strange words and quotations—"Dizionario del Pendolo di Foucault." William Weaver has performed nobly (and with praiseworthy speed) in producing an English translation that hums imperturbably along, through tunnels of French and Latin and Hebrew, around old graven illustrations, in an emblematic variety of type styles. "Foucault's Pendulum" is a dense and inventorial novel that lacks, and needs, an index.



It also needs more blood, more human juice. It has some. Casaubon, the narrator and the Templar expert who provides most of the scholarly ingredients of the three editors' witches' brew, fathers a baby in the course of the novel, and the birth inspires a few sentences striking in their unlayered simplicity, their humble celebration of the *Ding an sich*. Absorbed in an interview with a sinister taxidermist, Casaubon is late to the hospital, where his consort, Lia, has already delivered:

> Finally—I don't know how—I found myself in a room. Lia was pearly pale but smiling. Someone had lifted her hair and put it under a white cap. For the first time I saw Lia's forehead in all its splendor. Next to her was the Thing.
>
> "It's Giulio," she said.

Amparo, an earlier woman friend, a Brazilian mulatto, occasions some salty verbal exchanges, a little sexual heat, and an episode, in Brazil, that is psychologically interesting: attending a macumba ceremony as a disdainful, educated spectator, she is caught up in the dance and possessed by the she-devil Pomba Gira. Her lewd and rigid movements and her sweaty, breathless dismay afterward get Casaubon, as it were, to look at her. In general, even in bed, he is too busy reading to give his women enough attention to make them real to any reader but himself. But Eco, who was born in 1932, has had experience of being a child, university student, and intellectual in these last, stormy years of Italian history, and whenever he drops his occult texts and describes a village war between the resistance and the Fascists, or a student riot of the sixties, or the bar where the idle wits of Milan gather, an unforced authenticity breaks through, a breezy sense of witness, suggesting what he might write a novel about if he could ever forgo his ingenious schemes of signification and self-deconstruction, of encyclopedic foolery.

The most bloodless of the three heroes is Diotallevi, a Piedmontese who thinks he is a Jew, and who exists only to waste away, infected by the terrible sacrilege of the plot he has joined in concocting. He sees in the cancer that afflicts him the product of intellectual tampering, a transposition in the DNA alphabet generated by the mock conspiracy's devilishly clever transpositions of fact: "To manipulate the letters of the Book takes great piety, and we didn't have it. . . . If you alter the Book, you alter the world; if you alter the world, you alter the body. . . . I'm dying because we were imaginative beyond bounds." But Diotallevi at his liveliest has little vital presence, and Belbo, the most active of the pseudo occultists, has a fitful and strained one. He is a generation older than Casaubon but draws what fictional life he has from the same roots: Milanese bohemia and an obsession with texts. He is an unpublished writer, and fills a word processor called Abulafia with abortive confessions and stories that add up to a psychohistory of avoidance and nonparticipation relieved only by a childhood love for the trumpet and what becomes an obsession with the Templar conspiracy he has helped embroider. His character is spelled out but doesn't quite read convincingly. His lady love, the flighty, promiscuous, pinball-playing Lorenza, exists only to symbolize the Gnostic goddess Sophia, and his word-processed effusions, brilliant jumble though they are, just add to this novel's crushing burden of textuality. Words, words: "You write using the alibi of a machine, telling yourself you are a spectator, because you read yourself on the screen as if the words belonged to another, but you have fallen into the trap: you, too, are trying to leave footprints on the sands of time. You have dared to change the text of the romance of the world, and the romance of the world has taken you instead into its coils and involved you

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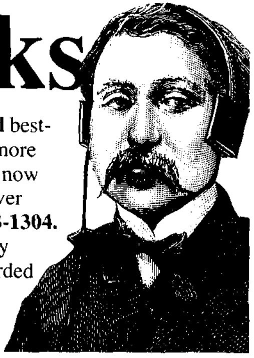

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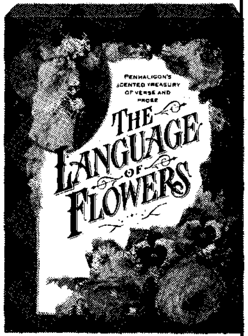

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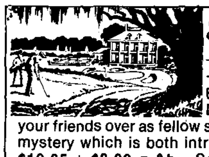

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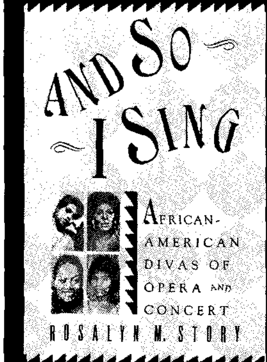

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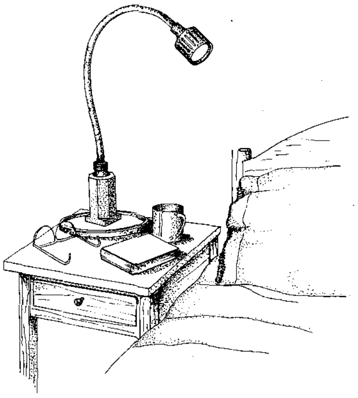

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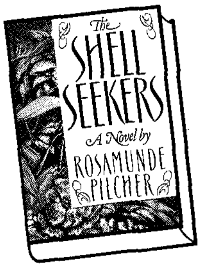

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in its plot, a plot not of your making." Though Belbo is shown as rising to a certain heroism before his demise, and his rustic boyhood is intently scanned for an epiphany, he becomes in the end just a toy on a string, and our patience with the novel's plethora of symbols snaps at the point where we are told, of his eccentrically twitching body, that "Belbo hanged from the Pendulum would have drawn, in space, the tree of the Sefirot, summing up in his final moment the vicissitude of all universes, fixing forever in his motion the ten stages of the mortal exhalation and defecation of the divine in the world."

Some rather sweet morals are extracted from this papery honeycomb. The "real secret," in terms of bodily health, is "to let the cells proceed according to their own instinctive wisdom." "It's wrong," Lia tells the inventive Casaubon, "to add to the inventings that already exist." "Truth is brief," Casaubon tells us, near the conclusion of more than two hundred thousand words supposedly confided to paper in the space of two days. He remembers the childhood bliss of biting into a peach, and says, "Like Belbo when he played the trumpet, when I bit into the peach I understood the Kingdom and was one with it. The rest is only cleverness."

Eco's tower of cleverness, which melts in the mind as it is climbed, is a remarkable intellectual phenomenon, however flimsy and lopsided as an imitation of human actions. One has to think back to the Brothers Grimm and Henry Wadsworth Longfellow to find an academic turning from scholarship to achieve such popular success. Eco is an initiate and an adept in the critical mysteries, whose magus is Jacques Derrida, that have supposedly rendered literature obsolete. "Semiotics and the Philosophy of Language" (1984) and "The Aesthetics of Chaosmos" (1989) are the titles of two of his books that will not make the best-seller list and a million-dollar-plus paperback advance. Derrida-ism, however liberating its effect upon university English faculties, does not offer much encouragement to creative writing. Indeed, insofar as it has revealed the once-revered canon of English-language literary classics to be largely a bag of dirty tricks played by imperialist white males upon minorities and women, it might be supposed to exert a depressive effect. For who wants to add to a bag of dirty tricks? And Eco's novel does come burdened by a complicated, if not downright guilty, conscience. His practical answer to the difficulties of making literature is to appropriate what he calls "dime novel" plots and pump them full to bursting of professional learning. Belbo and Casaubon, those two faces of one post-structuralist coin, argue the case for "cheap fiction": "Maybe only cheap fiction gives us the true measure of reality. . . . Proust was right: life is represented better by bad music than by a Missa solemnis. . . . The dime novel . . . pretends to joke, but then it shows us the world as it actually is—or at least the world as it will become. . . . History is closer to what Sue narrates than to what Hegel projects. Shakespeare, Melville, Balzac, and Dostoyevski all wrote sensational fiction. What has taken place in the real world was predicted in penny dreadfuls." The inclusion of the canonical names muddles what I take to be the basic point: popular romantic narration, by seizing upon our dreams and manipulating our passions, presents the forces that shape the world—"the world as it will become"—as opposed to relatively inert and backward-looking highbrow realism. In this, Eco echoes Borges' distrust of the modernist mandarins, his reiterated preference of Wells and Chesterton over Henry James and James Joyce. But, of course, mandarins distrust themselves, as heroes: Joyce's triumph was to move from the mind of Stephen Dedalus into that of Leopold Bloom—to put a dime-novel mentality in a narrative frame of Thomistic rigor and Homeric grandeur. Eco's strategy in "Foucault's Pendulum" is the reverse: to put his three Milanese bibliophilic polymaths in a dime-novel plot. The novel gothically begins with Casaubon hiding for hours in a kind of periscope within a darkened museum, and ends with a scene of ritual revelry and sacrifice like something out of "Salammbô." That cumbersome and punishing novel, indeed, is the nearest analogy I can think of for this de-luxe monstrosity, this million-dollar penny dreadful.

—JOHN UPDIKE

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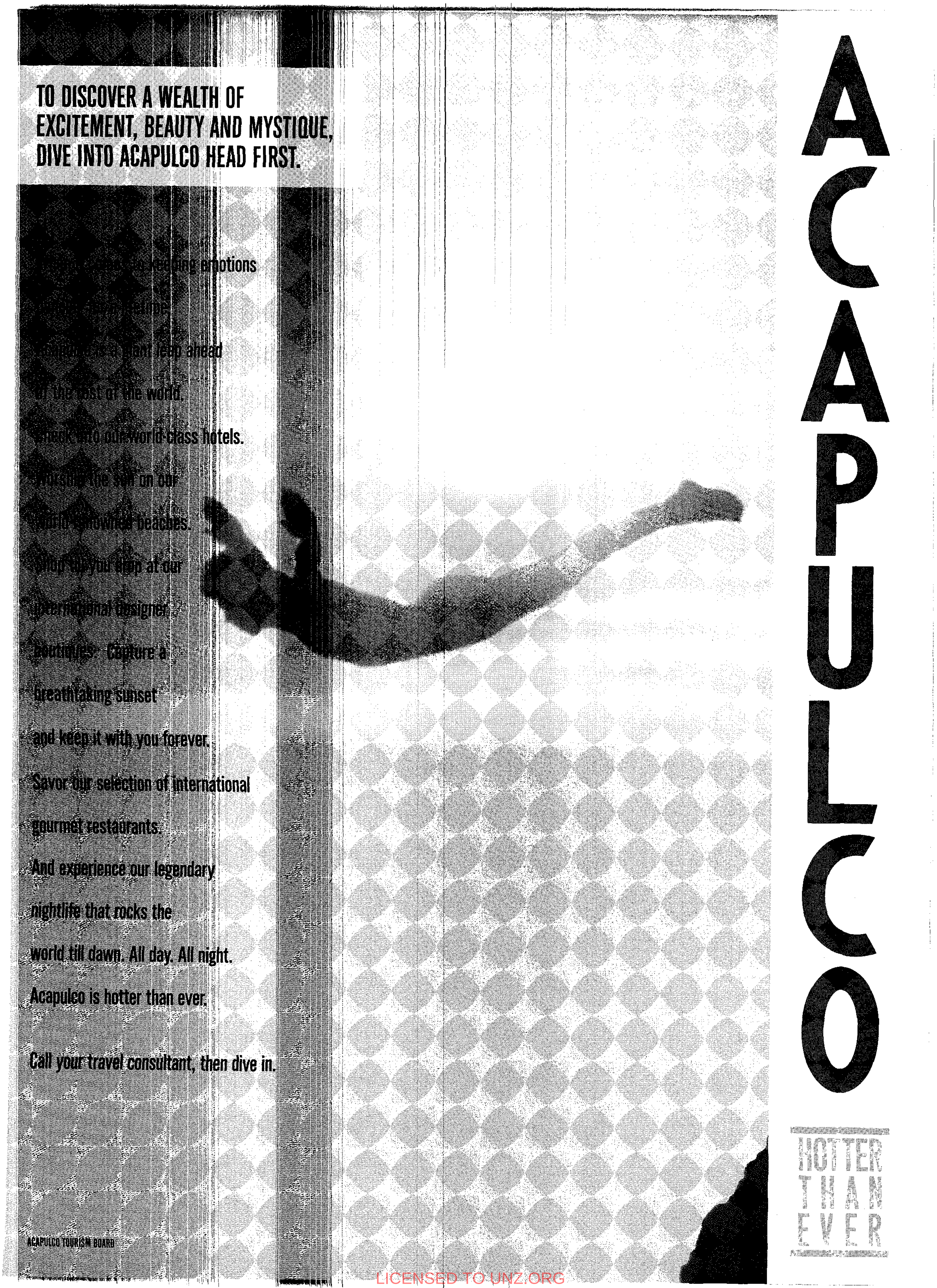

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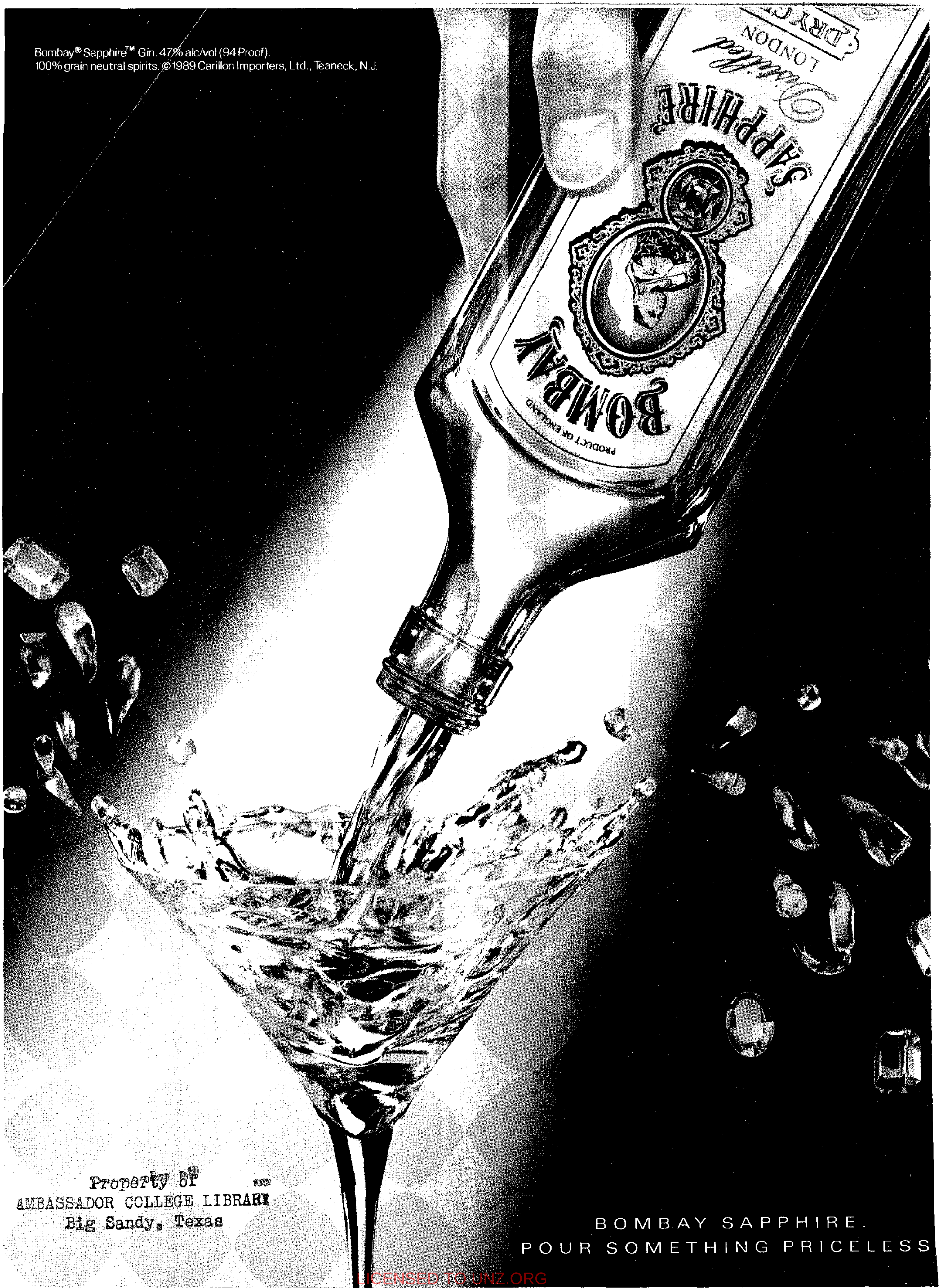
Bombay® Sapphire™ Gin. 47% alc/vol (94 Proof).
100% grain neutral spirits. © 1989 Carillon Importers, Ltd., Teaneck, N.J.
DRY GIN
LONDON
Distilled
SAPPHIRE
BOMBAY
PRODUCT OF ENGLAND
BOMBAY SAPPHIRE.
POUR SOMETHING PRICELESS

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